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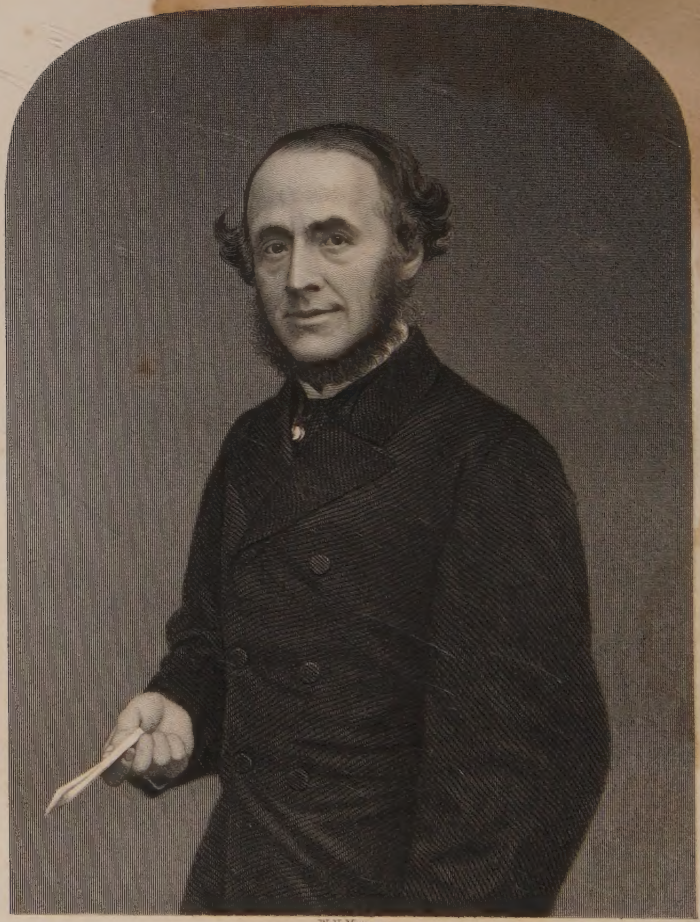

W. H. Mote sc.

George Williams

LECTURES

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION,

IN EXETER HALL,

FROM NOVEMBER, 1864, TO FEBRUARY, 1865.

1006.

LONDON:
JAMES NISBET AND CO., BERNERS STREET.
HAMILTON, ADAMS, AND CO., PATERNOSTER ROW.

LONDON:
PARDON AND SON, PRINTERS,
PATERNOSTER ROW.

PREFACE.

With great thankfulness to God for His abounding and long-continued mercies, the Committee of the Young Men's Christian Association present in this Volume the permanent record of the Twentieth Series of Exeter Hall Lectures.

The special obligation under which the Lecturers have laid the Association, will be felt by all who read these pious, learned and eloquent discourses.

There is probably no Volume of the series in regard to which a disclaimer of responsibility is less necessary. Yet it may be fitting in this twentieth volume to repeat what was said by the Committee on the publication of the first, that in meeting the general desire for the publication of these Lectures they do not hold themselves responsible for every utterance of the Lecturers. Their duty is to ask good men to lecture, and for the selection of Lecturers they are responsible to God and to the public supporters of the Association; but as they do not choose the subjects, and could not, if they would, control the methods in which they may be treated, they act in this publication only as intermediaries in responding to a public demand.

They commend this Volume to public favour, and ask for it careful perusal, and they pray that the blessing of the Lord may attend this renewed effort to promote the "spiritual and mental improvement of Young Men."

W. EDWYN SHIPTON,
SECRETARY.

YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION
OFFICES AND LIBRARY,
165, *Aldersgate-street*,
London, E.C.
7th March, 1865.

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CONTENTS.

Page

THE HISTORY OF THE MEDITERRANEAN 1
By the Rev. J. S. HOWSON, D.D.

CHALMERS 41
By the Rev. JOHN CAIRNS, D.D.

THE CHARACTER OF CHRIST AN ARGUMENT FOR THE LITERAL TRUTHFULNESS OF THE FOUR GOSPELS 73
By the Rev. CHARLES VINCE.

FROM DOUBT TO FAITH 119
By the Rev. R. W. DALE, M.A.

JOHN ANGELL JAMES 165
By the Rev. JOHN C. MILLER, D.D.

ITALY AND FRANCE, WITH REFERENCE TO THEIR PRESENT RELIGIOUS CONDITION 205
By the Rev. RICHARD BURGESS, B.D.

Page

Some of the Social Laws of Moses considered in their Influence on the Character of the Hebrew Boy, Youth, and Man 231

By the Rev. John Edmond, D.D.

Rivers: Notes on the Laws which they Obey, and the Lessons which they Teach 273

By the Rev. William Arnot, M.A.

Wilberforce: His Life, Work, and Fellow-Workers . 297

By the Rev. W. Morley Punshon, M.A.

M. Renan on the Kingdom of God 343

By the Very Rev. William Alexander, M.A., Dean of Emly.

The History of the Mediterranean

A LECTURE

DELIVERED BY

THE REV. J. S. HOWSON, D.D.

PRINCIPAL OF LIVERPOOL COLLEGE,

AND JOINT AUTHOR OF "THE LIFE AND EPISTLES OF ST. PAUL."

ANALYSIS.

The name "Mediterranean"—The significance of its "History"—Dr. Johnson's Dictum—PHYSICAL FEATURES of the Mediterranean—The *Relation and Form of its component Basins*—Position of Tyre, Athens, Carthage, Rome, Venice, Constantinople, &c.—The *Diversity of its Shores*—Connexion of this with the Varieties of Human Character—Its *many Islands and Promontories*—Observations of Humboldt—Its *small Dimensions*—Early Lessons of Civilization—Its *Relation to the countries round it*—The great Rivers and the Courses of Caravans—Historical Divisions of the Subject—The *Egyptians*—The Nile—The *Etrurians*—Hiero's Victory—The PHŒNICIANS—Their Commercial Enterprise—Ezekiel's Description of Tyre—The Alphabet—The GREEKS—Poetic Age of Mythological Voyages—Ulysses and the Argonauts—Persian War—Battle of Salamis—Triumph and Spread of Greek Civilization—Alexander and Alexandria—The ROMANS—The beginning of their Maritime Power—The Punic Wars—The Civil Wars—Pompey and his Son—The Empire and the Provinces—The Barbarians—The Middle Age—The SARACEN and the CRUSADER—Queen Margaret of France—Death of St. Louis—Results of the Crusades—The *Oceanic Discoveries*—The Mediterranean of Modern Times—Steamboats—Conclusion.

THE HISTORY

OF THE MEDITERRANEAN.

The "History of the Mediterranean"—I feel that I must begin my lecture by explaining what I mean by the phrase. The words have an ambitious sound. At the same time they are vague and indistinct. It is not very clear what the subject proposed is intended to be. Still the phrase expresses the subject better than any I could have chosen. I believe the best way to justify it will be to explain the words of which it is composed.

The "Mediterranean Sea" is the "Sea within the Land." This is literally the meaning of the word. And it expresses exactly the feelings of an Englishman when he speaks of that sea. When we look on the map, it presents to us the appearance of a "sea within the land." The Mediterranean is the same in Continental geography that Windermere or Loch Lomond is in the geography of Britain. But the men of the ancient world took a different view. We look from without; they, from within. We look on the Mediterranean as on a picture within a frame. Their place was on the boundary of its waters; and all the continent of Europe is between their home and ours. It is true that the word "Mediterranean" is an old Latin word,—older than Cicero or than Livy,—but in its application as the name of this sea, it is extremely modern. I have not been able to investigate the steps by which the word has travelled to its present

acceptation; but I believe its familiar use, in this sense, is entirely subsequent to the Eastern and Western voyages of Columbus and Vasco di Gama. Since the time of those discoveries, which enlarged so suddenly and so wonderfully the ideas of man concerning the world which he inhabits, this inland sea has been only a minute and secluded portion of a vast oceanic surface. Our children, in their earliest years, learn to understand it in this relation. They know quite as much, and often more, of the Atlantic and Pacific; and, if they know anything at all of geography, they know that the Ocean is large and the Mediterranean small. But not so with the ancients. The shores of the Mediterranean were their own familiar coasts. There they gathered the shells and pebbles of their childhood. Those promontories, ever varying with light and shadow—those blue bays, sparkling in the sun—gave them their earliest ideas of land and water. All the Ocean beyond was involved in dark and impenetrable mystery. It was the subject, not of any exact knowledge, but only of fables and fairy tales. Thus the Jew and the Phœnician, the Greek and the Roman, the Saracen, and even the Crusader from Western Europe, use a different language from ours when they speak of the Mediterranean. They call it by a different name. To the Hebrew boy who gazed from the roofs of Joppa, and watched the setting sun across the western main, to him it was the "Great Sea." What a name for the Mediterranean! But if we had known nothing in our early days larger than the Lake of Tiberias or the waters of Merom, we too should have called it the "Great Sea." The Tyrian mother, who followed with her eye the lessening sail of that ship which carried her son to the West, gazed and spoke with less of wonder and of awe than the Jew; for the sea was her children's home. But let that ship be bound on the longest Phœnician voyage, and how different are the thoughts it calls up, from those which are associated with a British

vessel bound for Australia or for China! The Greek, like the Phœnician, was a sailor; but he hardly knew even the Mediterranean itself as a whole. He divided it into parts, and each part was named after the coast which it bordered, or in memory of some hero of his lively mythology. The Romans had a proud name for the Inland Sea: they made it the mirror of their own greatness: they called it "Our Sea,"—the sea which belongs to Rome—the sea which the Empire encircles. No name was ever more true, if we look to its historical significance; but none could imply a more entire disregard of all with which we ourselves are most familiar. Descend still further, and enter the Middle Ages. The name of the Roman Empire still lingers as the spirit of a mighty power on the shores which once it possessed. Tracts of country where the Greek language was spoken were called "Roumelia"—the language was called "Romaic" —and Arab boatmen, now at home on the waters of the Mediterranean, called it the "Sea of Rome." Nor did the Crusaders, or any pilgrim or traveller before Columbus, bring this sea before the minds of ordinary men in its true character, as the part of an oceanic system. To put this in the strongest light, I need only remind you that the Crusaders did not enter it by the Straits of Gibraltar. But I must not proceed any further with what is only meant to illustrate a definition; and I am labouring to exhibit a contrast which after all is sufficiently obvious. Let any one who reads Horace compare the ode in which he intreats a safe voyage for his friend Virgil to Athens, with that touching sonnet written by Wordsworth, when Sir Walter Scott went from Abbotsford to Naples,—

> "Be true,
> Ye winds of *Ocean*, and the *Midland Sea*,
> Wafting your charge to soft Parthenope."

Let any one put these two poems side by side, and he will feel the contrast in a moment.

This then is the Mediterranean as we are to contemplate it this evening. I must ask you to forget your great merchantmen, your emigrant ships, your American steamers. Let a sudden cloud come over the Atlantic and Pacific. Let Australia and New Zealand vanish from the chart. Let Captain Cook and Dampier be forgotten. Imagine Liverpool to become, what it never can be again, a squalid village of poor barbarians on a cold, inhospitable shore. Imagine that you see nothing before you but the water, which washes the inner shores of Africa and Asia, and separates Europe from both.

And now what is meant by the "History" of this sea—the "History of the Mediterranean"? Whence has it so much dignity, that it should separate itself from all other seas and claim a history of its own? I remember some severe words, which a modern poet has addressed to it in reference to a defect, or supposed defect, in its physical character :—

> "O thou great heartless sea! without a tide
> To bless thee with its changing."

Literally, as we all know, this is true, or nearly true. The Mediterranean has no tides, or hardly any. But, in another sense, it has known the changing and the blessing of many tides. Not without the flux and reflux of mighty movements has the Mediterranean slept through silent centuries in the embrace of three continents. The flow of conquest—the pauses of victory—the ebb of declining power—these are the tides which have made its shores illustrious. Not only has it been ordained to be the scene of great histories, but it has been the scene of nearly all the history of Man, down to the time which I have already referred to as our chronological limit,—the time when the curtains of the Ocean were suddenly uplifted. No. The Mediterranean is not a "heartless sea." Those who care to know it find that it has a heart, full of a noble and passionate life. We can almost personify

it, and appeal to it as a living witness of the greatest passages of our human history.

Thus you see what I mean by the "History of the Mediterranean." It is the history of its shores and its waters, as connected with Man—it is the history of those human changes of which it has been the scene and the witness, or (to speak more correctly) in which it has participated, and to the furtherance of which its own providential adaptations have contributed. I need not say more to illustrate the greatness of the subject. I suppose you expect me to quote Dr. Johnson's celebrated sentence:—"The grand object of travelling," he said, "is to see the shores of the Mediterranean. On those shores were the four great empires of the world: the Assyrian, the Persian, the Grecian, and the Roman. All our religion, almost all our law, almost all our arts, almost all that sets us above savages, has come to us from the shores of the Mediterranean." The sentence is well worth remembering, and we may thank Boswell that he has taken his usual pains to record it. The sentence would have lost something in point, but it would have gained in accuracy and completeness, if the Assyrian and the Persian had been omitted, and the Crusader and the Saracen introduced. For surely the connexion of this sea is more close with Saladin or Othman than with Nebuchadnezzar or Shalmaneser; and when we are musing on this subject, the remembrance of English Richard or St. Louis of France comes more naturally over us, than that of Cyrus and Darius. Still the sentence remains substantially true, and nothing could be more true than the remark it suggested at the time. The conversation took place in General Paoli's house; and Boswell adds that the General observed, that "the Mediterranean would be a noble subject for a poem." It was either Southey or Cowper who said, in reference to this remark, "It is a subject, not for one poem, but for twenty poems." And I fear that when I am endeavouring so ambitious a task as to give one

lecture on the "History of the Mediterranean," it may be exclaimed very justly, "One lecture! enough for twenty!" Well now, I am well aware that it is difficult (perhaps presumptuous) to attempt to give in one single lecture even a general sketch and outline of the argument. But we all know what a Panorama can do for us in default of something better. Besides this, I am addressing those who are in the habit of pursuing (according to their opportunities) historical and religious studies for themselves; and if this lecture gives to any of them a starting-point, or any useful suggestions, they will not think that they have met here this evening in vain.

Now, having explained my meaning, having stated my subject, let me ask you to call up before your mind the map of the Mediterranean, or rather, I would say, the *chart* of the Mediterranean, for that which we have to consider to-night is not a tract of land with its bordering waters, but a tract of sea with the coasts that are its boundary. And before we pass on to what is properly historical, let us give some attention to the PHYSICAL FEATURES of the sea which is before us.

1. The first feature of this physical configuration, to which notice should be directed, is the *form of the basins* which compose the Mediterranean, and *their relations to each other.* The great Western Basin, bounded by the shores of Barbary, Spain, France, and Italy, and containing the islands of Sardinia, Corsica, and the Balearic group, is definitely separated from the rest. Once it was probably a different sea; and even now the projecting coasts of Italy and Africa, with Sicily between them, and the small islands and shallow waters of these dangerous channels, give this basin a distinctive character, which arrests the eye, and is well known to sailors. The other two basins, the Middle and the Eastern, are far more socially connected with each other. Greece is

the country that divides them ; but it willingly leaves a free and open space, unbroken by any island, between its southernmost point and the shore of Africa. Yet you will observe how, in the first of these basins, the Adriatic withdraws and secludes itself far to the north, as if it might become the safe retreat of some great historical city,—and how, in the eastern basin, the Egean, with all its islands, is fenced off and fortified by Candia, Cerigo, and Rhodes, and evidently (may we not say so?) destined to be the sanctuary of a remarkable people. It is indeed no dream of fancy which associates the great cities and remarkable nations of the Mediterranean with the configuration of its coasts. Place yourself at *Tyre*, in the very centre of the eastern coast, and see how free and unhindered was the Phœnician's prospect over all the waters to the west. Look where *Carthage*, the daughter of Tyre, established herself on the verge of the Western Basin, to be the mistress of Western commerce, till Rome should arise and be the mistress of the world. Look at *Athens* and *Corinth* (for here we must class them together, the one as the centre of the arts of Greece, the other as the centre of her trade) —see how ready they are to meet the Persians on their western progress, to grapple with them and defeat them. See where *Rome* is gathering her strength on the further shore of Italy, how conveniently she is situated for the conquest of Spain and of Gaul, and at the same time how inevitable it is, that, when she has occupied Corinth and Carthage, all the Mediterranean must be under her sway. I have already made a passing allusion to the position of *Venice;* need I point to that of *Constantinople?* —need I show (to employ the fine expression of the Republican poet of modern France) that it was, by its very position, "a predestinated capital?" I preclude myself from travelling far beyond the middle ages, or I would ask you to

notice how Gibraltar and Alexandria, with Malta between them, are the necessary stages between Britain and her Indian Empire.

2. In the next place I would remark, as a physical characteristic of the Mediterranean, the *diversity of its coasts.* There is something very striking in the contrast—a contrast not unnoticed by the ancients—between the southern and northern shores—between Africa and Europe—between the long, dull monotony of that shore where civilisation has seldom flourished, and never flourished but to decay, and the endless variety of form and outline in that other shore, where all the powers and graces of the human intellect have displayed themselves through successive centuries—between the country of the Negro and the Moor, and the countries of Plato and Cicero, of Homer and Dante, of Phidias and Raphael. To dwell at greater length on such a contrast as this would be fanciful and extravagant. But no student of history should be ignorant of the close connection which has ever subsisted between the relations of land and water and the peculiarities of climate and soil on the one hand, and the direction of commercial enterprise and the formation of national character on the other. With this clue to guide us, we might follow all the windings of the Mediterranean coast-line and gain much useful instruction. Thus, entering by the Straits of Gibraltar, we might begin with the south and south-east borders of Spain. I never saw any coast so utterly forbidding and inhospitable ; yet the Phœnicians came to these brown tremendous mountains, and dug there for silver and iron. It was the Peru of the ancient world, not only for the Phœnicians, but also for the Romans. I well remember the satisfaction with which I saw at Carthagena a Roman pig of lead, stamped with Latin letters, just as it had been dropped on its way from the mine to the shore. From Carthagena you pass to Valencia.

There you are in a rich and sunny plain, where the palm-trees grow, like the palm-trees in Syria. It is called the Garden of Spain; and the character of the people corresponds with their climate and their soil. These are only specimens, and by no means the most remarkable. We might travel by the vineyards of Catalonia to the Pyrenees, and thence to the orange-gardens where France and Italy meet at the bases of the Alps, and onwards to the south and the east, and everywhere we should be reminded of the links between man and the place he inhabits, and of the variety of character which these diversified shores have fostered. But I hasten to another point, which has a still closer connection with the historical progress of the men of the Mediterranean.

3. You must often have observed the *great number of islands and promontories* in this sea. There is no great empty space. You never sail far without seeing land. Where Africa recedes, on the east of Tunis, there Italy, Greece, and Asia Minor boldly come forward; and Cyprus, Candia, and Malta take their places still farther in advance. Where Genoa withdraws herself within the bosom of her beautiful gulf, the islands of Corsica and Sardinia come in and occupy their positions as the stages between Europe and Africa. The frequent islands and promontories—the straits and isthmuses—the sinuous and deeply-indented shores of this sea—have been finely pointed out by Humboldt as circumstances "beneficently favourable" to the intercourse of nations and the enlargement of the circle of ideas. This providential arrangement of land and water is especially to be remarked in the islands of the Egean, and in the broken, irregular approaches between Europe and Asia. These waters have been the thoroughfare of nations; these islands the stepping-stones of civilization. Here the East and the West became familiar with each other. Xerxes

and Alexander passed this way—here the "Man of Macedonia" appeared to the Apostle, and said on the Asiatic shore: "Come over"—into Europe—"and help us."

4. There is another feature of this historical sea which requires our attention,—I mean its *small dimensions*, as compared with what we know to be the extent of the great Oceanic spaces. It is true that a distance of some two thousand miles separates the Straits of Gibraltar from the coast of Syria; but not more than eighty miles intervene between the south point of Sicily and the northern point of Africa. By a reference to this scale, the eye will at once inform us of the small spaces which separate Rome from Malta, Constantinople from Athens, Antioch from Jerusalem. The Morea is not much larger than Yorkshire and Lancashire together. Palestine is not half the size of Scotland. We see how appropriate a place this Mediterranean was for the lessons of early navigation, for testing the results of political experiments, for the first rudiments of sacred truth. This sea was the school of the human race. Here civilized man was detained till he had learned his Latin and his Greek, and his religion too—his Old and New Testament lessons. I hope we are in no danger of letting this be forgotten. For here, in the Mediterranean, it was that the Greek and Latin languages, which have ever since been the educators of the highest human intellects, were formed and perfected. These waters carried the ship of Jonah from Joppa, and floated down from Tyre King Hiram's beams of cedar wood. By the sea-side on one of these shores St. Peter prayed: on one of these islands St. Paul was wrecked. Across this sea Ignatius sailed to his martyrdom at Rome: at Hippo, on the Carthaginian shore, Augustine wrote those volumes which have instructed the Christian centuries. That which gives school its dignity is, that it is a little world which prepares for the great world;

and that which is the dignity and glory of the Mediterranean is not that it is a majestic expanse of water covering half the globe, but that it was ordained to be the school of the human race.

5. There is still one other physical peculiarity, without the mention of which our enumeration would be incomplete. The *relation* of the Mediterranean *to the countries behind it and around it*, should be carefully remarked. Though it is so isolated as to be almost a lake, yet there is an opening on the west through which the Ocean could be entered, and enterprising voyages to the remote islands of Africa and Europe could bring in the fruits of immediate trade, and foster the hopes of future discovery. On the east the inlet of the Red Sea, only arrested by the narrowest isthmus from mingling its waters with those of Greece and Rome, brought the riches of the Asiatic Archipelago, which the monsoons had wafted from unvisited continents. On the north the Dardanelles, like a natural canal, made the Black Sea one with the Mediterranean. Consider too the rivers in their character of the highways of commerce—the Danube, the Rhone, the Ebro—and especially the Nile, the river of the Pharaohs and Ptolemies, which enriched by its wares the bazaars of Thebes, Alexandria, and Cairo, not less than it fattened the cornfields by its annual inundation. Observe again the courses of the inland caravans, and see how they terminate on the shores of this sea—Ishmaelites coming down through Syria with slaves for the Potiphars of Egypt, —Arabians by Petra and Damascus, with spices for the markets of Tyre and Jerusalem—Gauls and Germans, who carried from the shores of the Baltic the golden amber for the ladies of Rome—Lombard merchants, now making bargains in the markets of Germany, and now in those of Venice and Pisa—pilgrims wending their way to the Holy Sepulchre, and returning with wonderful stories of the

East to their countrymen at home, who were building the cathedrals.

Now if we consider these mere physical features of the Mediterranean,—the distribution of its component basins,—the endless diversity of its shores,—the multitude of its islands and peninsulas,—its small dimensions,—and its relation to the countries beyond it,—if we consider all these things in the manner I have suggested,—there will not be much difference of opinion amongst us as to the manifold interest of the subject. The mere natural phenomena of this sea,—its vegetation—its zoology—its climate—its currents, winds, and storms,—acquire a new and dignified interest, when we view them as the conditions of human advancement, and the predestined agents in the growth of civilization. Still more is this true of the direct records of man himself. The memorials of language and art, the costume and the armour of successive generations on these illustrious shores, the architecture,—cities, forts, and harbours,—temples, mosques, and churches,—shipbuilding and the rigging of boats,—each of these might be the subject of a lecture. These miscellaneous topics are sufficiently tempting; but we must not allow ourselves to dwell on them, in that which is meant to be only a general sketch. Leaving, then, all other considerations, let us attempt some systematic arrangement of leading facts. Let us contemplate the great historical divisions of the argument. I would wish all that has been said to be considered introductory and suggestive, while I endeavour, in the time which remains, to describe those nations who successively possessed the empire of the Midland Sea.

I have already said, when I ventured to criticise Dr. Johnson's dictum, that it is better to omit Assyria and Persia from our historical series. Though those empires

did, at certain periods, come in contact with these waters, that contact was too brief and accidental to require our attention here. Assyria and Persia have a great place in the history of the world, but not a very important one in the history of the Mediterranean. And there are two other powers, at first sight deserving of particular notice, which nevertheless I feel justified in passing over slightly and rapidly. These two powers are the Egyptians and the Etrurians.

As regards the *Egyptians*, though their dominion was once extended to meet that of Assyria, though much is revealed to those who understand the hieroglyphics, of the homage and tribute paid by foreign nations to the monarchs who reigned on the Nile,—though expeditions are traced through Palestine to the Euphrates, and sculptures are seen at Thebes which commemorate naval victories,—still, on the whole, the Egyptians never possessed a great Mediterranean empire. Their trade lay far more in the Eastern Asiatic seas. The produce of the far-distant archipelago was brought in Arabian ships, and thence across the land to the Nile, and so floated downwards to the inner coast, where the Phœnician and the Greek laded their vessels. But the Sacred River itself was closed to the Phœnician and the Greek. The Egyptians were the Chinese of the Ancient world. They had a Mediterranean of their own, with which they were well content,—their ancient venerated river. Its sweet waters were the scene of their maritime adventures. No boats, with English flags flying at the stern, with English sportsmen and printed guide-books, moved then through successive days from the Delta to the Cataracts. But the ancient paintings represent to us a scene not less attractive. The lotus was painted on the rudder, the eye was painted on the prow, the sails of gay bright colours were filled with the steady northern breeze,—

and the men who lived before the Pyramids enjoyed, like the modern traveller, the monotonous and dreamy luxury of a voyage on the Nile.

The *Etrurians* had no sacred river. They were really a maritime people. But they were corsairs rather than traders; at least, so we must consider them, if we are to believe what we are told by the Greeks. It is certain that they never held, for any long period, an extensive sway, political and commercial. Their arts and sciences, their auguries and institutions, passed by imperceptible degrees into the civilization of the Romans; and their foreign history ends with their great defeat by Hiero, in their own waters, off the coast of Campania. Without troubling you with any remarks on the identity or difference of the Etrurians and Tyrrhenians, I have two or three reasons for mentioning this victory in passing. It cleared the sea from some of the rivals of the Greeks,—it is celebrated with enthusiasm in the odes of Pindar,—and it is commemorated by another curious monument—a helmet discovered not long ago at Olympia, which seems, from the inscription, to have been dedicated by Hiero in token of his victory. It is impossible now to enter into the merits of this quarrel, or to ascertain how far these Italian sailors were merchants or pirates. Corsica and Elba were less known to those who met at the Olympian games than Borneo and Labuan are known to those who meet at the London Exchange. I suppose we may carry on the parallel, and say that Hiero was honoured according to the customs of the Greeks, as some years ago we were proud to honour that distinguished man who devoted his life to the extinction of piracy in the Malay Archipelago, and who was known amongst us at once as an English Hero and an Eastern Rajah.

I. Leaving, then, the Egyptians and Etrurians, our

Historical Review must begin with another people. We must begin with the PHŒNICIANS. When we are to count and enumerate the waves of empire which rolled successively across the Inland Sea, we must first take our stand at Tyre, and look towards the West. Of all that series of potentates who ruled in these waters —

> "First of the throng, with enterprising brow,
> The keen Phœnician steers his shadowy prow;
> To him, sole hierarch of the secret main,
> Had hoary Neptune shown his ancient reign,
> And told of realms, and islands of the blest,
> Beyond the fabled Pillars of the West.
> The Tyrian mother with her boy would stand
> On the wet margin of the shell-strewn sand,
> Point his ancestral birthright,—bid him roam
> O'er its wide plains, and call its waves his home,
> Till Ocean loved him like a foster-child,
> And Commerce on the bold adventurer smiled,
> As oft she saw his daring sail unfurled,
> To found a Carthage, or explore a world."

The Phœnician was essentially a merchant. With none of the intellectual culture of the Greek, with none of the political capacity of the Roman,—athirst, not for power, but for profit—dreaming, not of heroic ancestors, but of successful bargains, he directed his course to those places where he could buy and sell to the greatest advantage. Like the Jew of the middle ages, he brought with him trinkets and ornaments, ivory, gold, and silver, and variegated garments, the richest works of the loom. Grain and wool, hides and slaves, were the cargo of his return. Everything that was profitable was convenient to the Phœnician. He shrank from no danger; he rejoiced in long voyages. As a far-ranging commercial people, as enterprising navigators, as keen and fearless explorers of distant spaces, we may,

without reproof, compare the Phœnicians to the Americans. In one respect they were different. The Phœnicians had no passion for the annexatiou of provinces. If they could dig in California, they cared not to be the possessors of it. Their mining works in Spain have been already alluded to. It should be remembered that the working of these mines does not imply any great territorial occupation. Their empire was the sea; and they preferred such settlements as could easily be approached by the "watery ways." They have left the traces of their activity in far-distant islands, as in Cyprus, in Thasos, in Sardinia; and we can follow the course of their factories along the remotest coasts—at Carthage, at Malaga, at Cadiz.

No illustration of this wide-spread mercantile activity is more interesting to us, than one which is afforded by our own antiquarian museums. The celts of the ancient Britons are made of a certain bronze, which is compounded of copper and of tin. The tin was found in Britain and exported in large quantities; but it appears that the copper was imported, probably from Cyprus. Let this fact be attentively considered, and it reveals a whole world of primitive traffic, whether we suppose that Phœnician vessels sailed between Cadiz and Cornwall, or that this interchange of metals went on by channels of interior communication through Spain and Gaul.

Thus we can well understand all the force of Ezekiel's imagery, when he prophesies of the destruction of Tyre. "Shall not the isles shake at the sound of thy fall? All the princes of the sea shall come down from their thrones and lay away their robes, and put off their broidered garments: they shall clothe themselves with trembling: they shall sit upon the ground: they shall take up a lamentation for thee, and say to thee, How art thou destroyed, that wast inhabited of seafaring men, the renowned city, which wast strong in the sea, she and her inhabitants, which cause their

terror to be on all that haunt it! The isles shall tremble in the day of thy fall. The isles in the sea shall be troubled at thy departure. . . . . All that handle the oar, the mariners, and all the pilots of the sea, shall come down from their ships; they shall stand upon the land, and shall cause their voice to be heard against thee, and shall cry bitterly; and in their wailing they shall take up a lamentation for thee, and lament over thee, saying, What city is like Tyre, the destroyed in the midst of the sea?"

What words can give a stronger impression of the greatness and reality of that mercantile empire which the Phœnicians had established? But Ezekiel has entered into minute detail concerning the nautical enterprise and industrial prosperity of this people. I must quote some of the verses in which he describes their vessels, and enumerates the nations that traded with Tyre.

"O thou that art situate at the entry of the sea, which art the merchant of the people for many isles! Thy borders are in the midst of the seas, thy builders have perfected thy beauty. They have made all thy ship-boards of fir-trees of Senir: they have taken cedars from Lebanon to make thee masts. Of the oaks of Bashan have they made thine oars: thy benches were of ivory, brought from the isles of Chittim: fine linen with broidered work from Egypt was spread to be thy sail. The inhabitants of Zidon and Arvad were thy mariners. Thy wise men, O Tyre, that were in thee, were thy pilots. The ancients of Gebal and the wise men thereof were thy calkers: all the ships of the sea with their mariners were in thee to occupy thy merchandise. Tarshish was thy merchant by reason of the multitude of all kind of riches; with silver, iron, tin, and lead, they traded in thy fairs. The men of Dedan were thy merchants; many isles were the merchandise of thine hand; they brought thee for a present horns of ivory and ebony. Syria was thy merchant

by reason of the multitude of the wares of thy making: they occupied in thy fairs with emeralds, purple and broidered work, and fine linen, and coral, and agate. Judah and the land of Israel were thy merchants; they traded in thy market wheat of Minnith, and honey, and oil, and balm. Damascus was thy merchant in the multitude of the wares of thy making, for the multitude of all riches: in the wine of Helbon and white wool. The merchants of Sheba, they were thy merchants; they occupied in thy fairs with chief of all spices, and with all precious stones, and gold. The ships of Tarshish did sing of thee in thy market, and thou wast replenished and made very glorious in the midst of the seas."

Such was Tyre in her glorious days. In all this prosperity we know, from the Prophet's upbraidings, that moral evil was closely interwoven. Even by the Greeks we are told that the Phœnician was a keen, knavish, over-reaching trader. Yet we need not hesitate to recognise all the greatness of the work he was appointed to do. This recognition in no way interferes with our sense of the reality and justice of the sentence pronounced. It is a serious and awful truth, that a nation or an individual may be labouring at a divinely-appointed task, even in the shadow of an overhanging doom. And doubtless such a task was discharged by the Phœnicians. They were truly and beyond all doubt a link in the chain of progressive civilization. They have left no great architectural monuments like their predecessors, the Etrurians and Egyptians; but they were not pirates, like the former, and they did not, like the latter, shut themselves up from free communication with mankind. Their great and successful efforts in establishing new lines of communication between one people and another, are enough to deserve the gratitude of posterity. Their arts and manufactures descended to later nations, though we may not be able to

trace the steps of the tradition. Some are of opinion that they possessed the compass, though they concealed it from others. There is little doubt that to them we are to trace the first beginnings of nautical charts; and they have one imperishable claim to our grateful recollection, for they first communicated to the Greeks the use of alphabetic writing. What would the world have been now if Homer's songs had gradually faded from remembrance—if Plato had been studied only by his contemporaries—if the speeches of Demosthenes had been spoken and forgotten—if History had been impossible? We are in the habit of dwelling with enthusiasm on the invention of printing: and we contrast, not without good reason, the age of manuscripts and the age of printed books. But where would our literature, our science, our education have been, if the Greeks and the Romans had possessed no alphabet?

II. We must leave the Phœnicians. They laboured hard in their day to keep up the monopoly of the Mediterranean; but they may not monopolize our attention this evening. Stories are told of Phœnician vessels running down Greek vessels; and it is said that the Tyrian mariners falsified the accounts of the ocean beyond the Pillars, that they might deter all rivals from entering on the scene of their distant trade. We know, however, that when once a lucrative course of commercial enterprise has been established, an opposition company is almost sure to start up. The GREEKS were the opposition company who succeeded the Phœnicians. The Greek inhabitants of Phocæa were the first to penetrate into those waters which the Etrurians infested with their piratic incursions; and a certain mariner of Samos (his name was Colæus, it is well worth recording, for he was the Columbus of Greece) being caught in a violent storm from the east, which lasted many days, "not without

Divine direction," as that religious old heathen Herodotus truly reminds us, was carried through the Pillars of Hercules into the wide ocean. These voyages of the Samians and Phoceæns introduce us at once into the whole field of the navigation of the Greeks. But to contemplate their navigation in its true historical aspect, we must step back in our chronology. we must look at the Greek voyages from their own centre and starting-point, and see in what manner they began in those Egean waters, which were correctly called in early times the "Greek Sea."

True to her character, Greece began her navigation with mythological voyages. Her poetry is the introduction to her history. When we come to the Greeks a new day rises on the Mediterranean; and the early dawn of this day is so beautiful, that we must pause to look round us before the dim twilight passes entirely away. All is disorder; but poetry is on every side. Some bright legend is on every shore, some image of beauty on every promontory. In what order can we classify them or attempt to enumerate them? The brother and the sister pass through the air on the Ram with the golden fleece: the sister falls into the waves: her name is given to the Hellespont. The father and the son escape from Crete with waxen wings: Icarus flies too near the sun, and his name, too, is commemorated among the islands. Ægeus looks out over the sea from the Athenian Acropolis: the ship is in sight with its black funereal sails: and he casts himself headlong from the rock. The vessel of the Argonauts is foundering in a storm; but Apollo sends an arrow from his golden bow, and an island emerges from the waves, with a harbour of shelter. The Sirens sing their dangerous song; but Ulysses has made his sailors deaf to the seduction, and fortified his own weakness by timely resolve. The sun in the far west shines upon the fruit in

the garden of the Hesperides, and the dragon watches with sleepless eyes.

Will you blame me for making so much of these legendary scenes? Will it be said that they are fable, not history? And will these pictures of the imagination be contrasted with the substantial advantages of Phœnician commerce? It is indeed quite true that the Greeks never claimed or possessed, like the Phœnicians, an exclusive commercial empire: but still we can assert for them the possession of an empire in the Mediterranean, even if we choose to go no further than the mythical age. It is the *Empire of Poetry.* These shores, these islands, and the blue intervening spaces, are evermore associated with the ideal forms of poetry and song, and the creations of the highest and most perfect art.

There are two voyages especially, created or embellished by the imagination of the Greeks, on which I would willingly dwell, and on which I believe we might dwell both innocently and usefully. As illustrations of the Hellenic mind, of the epical fancy of this wonderful people, of their wide-spread migrations, of the "religious and patriotic myths' which they carried with them, they are in the highest degree valuable. But they are Poetry, not History. Their geography is poetical, not scientific geography. The first is an Eastern voyage—that of the primeval ship Argo. Built by Minerva's inspiration, with an oracular prow from the beech woods of Dodona, with a crew of heroes from all parts of Greece, she sailed through many dangers to the point of her destination in the dark recesses of the Black Sea. Thence, after the successful sorceries of Medea, she penetrated by some river through the Caucasus to the waters of circumambient Oceanus, and then reappeared on the stream of the Nile. The other voyage is in the West—I allude, of course, to the wanderings of Ulysses, "whose

romantic adventures in fabulous places and among fabulous persons have been made familiarly known by Homer. The goddesses Calypso and Circe, the semi-divine mariners of Phæacia, whose ships are endowed with consciousness, and obey without a steersman, the one-eyed Cyclopes, the gigantic Læstrygones, and the wind-ruler Æolus—all these pictures formed integral and interesting portions of the old epic." But as for these fabulous places of fabulous persons (to apply the words of Pindar as they have been applied by the writer I have just been quoting), "you cannot approach them either by sea or by land; the wings of the poet alone can bring you there." If I were to attempt to give you exact geographical illustrations of the Argonautic voyage or the wanderings of Ulysses, I should be undertaking as foolish a task as if I were to tell you I was about to publish an atlas, with correct measurements and careful soundings, in illustration of the travels of Gulliver.

But the dim twilight of mythology does not continue. The false appearances gradually vanish: the realities arrange themselves in order, and the glorious sunrise of classical history comes on. As the mists clear away we begin to see an intelligible coast around us: Greek ships are at anchor under the wood-crowned rocks, Greek temples gleam in the sun, Greek cities are clustered round them, and each of these bright cities has the fire kindled from the mother city—each of them has the gods and the heroes—each of them speaks the wonderful language. As we gaze on these far-scattered settlements, not only in Greece, which is the centre, but in Asia on the east, and in Italy on the west, from Turkish Trebisonde to French Marseilles, a new empire is revealed as holding sway in the wide Mediterranean, not merely the Empire of Poetry, of which I have spoken, but the *Empire of Civilization.*

This is the idea we are to connect with the period of the

Greeks. They were the educators of man's intellect. They cultivated, they refined, they developed, his thought, his taste, and his science. And though I well know the utter worthlessness of civilization without religion, and of taste without morality, yet, if one nation has evidently been commissioned to accomplish this great work, I hold it to be profane to disregard it. We may well congratulate ourselves that the Greek, and not the Phœnician, was destined to wield the sceptre of the intellectual empire. To give force to this thought, I will refer you to the Persian wars. Nowhere do we see the Greek more conspicuously prominent in his relation to universal history. In these wars the East was marshalled against the West, and the West got the victory. When Xerxes came, some of the best vessels in his fleet were Phœnician. In the autumn of the year 480—ten years after the battle of Marathon—the two rivals met in the bay of Salamis.

A Greek poet, who fought in the battle of Salamis, has left us a description of it. He tells us how, after an anxious night, Day came with her white horses, and possessed the earth,—how the Greek host shouted to the echo of their native rocks, and how echo flung back a joyous reply,—how the trumpet then kindled all the coast with a blaze of sound,—how all the oars dashed with one stroke into the water and covered it with foam,—how (as when it was said at Trafalgar, "England expects that every man this day will do his duty"), so the cry was passed from ship to ship at Salamis: "Arise, sons of the Greeks, deliver your country, your homes, your children, the sepulchres of your fathers, the sanctuaries of your gods: this day ye fight for all. Then the poet tells us that a Phœnician vessel was the first that was struck. A Greek ship dashed against her with her brazen beak, drove in her timbers, and crushed the ornaments of her prow. The battle grew thick all around. The

sea was no longer visible. Soon the shores and the little islands were covered with the dead. The Persians were cut to pieces in one indiscriminate carnage; and the messenger in the tragedy tells the Persian queen that so many men were never before slaughtered in one day.

There is a certain excitement in a battle and a victory, which is apt to carry our feelings away, and to make us forget the horrors and misery of war. But when the battle has been a turning-point in the fortunes of a nation, when the victory has been the triumph of the better cause, then a certain enthusiasm is allowable. What Englishman does not kindle at the thought of Waterloo? What German is not proud when he remembers Leipsig? So may every scholar, every friend of enlightenment and knowledge, rejoice when he thinks of the battles of Marathon and Salamis; for these battles decided that the Persians should never possess the empire of the Mediterranean. Greece was not to be overrun and trampled down by barbarians from the East. The early days of the human race were not to receive an Asiatic culture. Had the tide of victory rolled the other way, Greek might never have been taught in the schools of Europe. We should almost certainly have been in a lower intellectual condition. If the voice of Greek poets and philosophers had been arrested and silenced, Shakspere, and Milton, and the English nation would scarcely have been what they are.

The Greeks, as we are told by Herodotus, after the battle of Salamis devoted to the gods three Phœnician ships as trophies of their victory. One was consecrated at Cape Colonna, the extreme point of the Athenian territory,—the second at the Isthmus of Corinth,—and the third in the bay of Salamis, which lay between them. This is a striking illustration of the Greek feeling of triumph over their hated rivals. And the triumph was complete. For the harvest of

Greek civilization, rescued from the spoiler, grew and ripened, and gave its seed; and the seed was re-sown, broadly and freely, by the hand of one great man, over Persia and Phœnicia, and from the Nile to the Indus. Tyre still retained something of her ancient eminence. But the Tyre of Alexander was Greek rather than Phœnician. Were we to follow Alexander the Great on his eastern campaign, we should be carried far beyond our limits. But we see all the momentous results of his life, when our eye falls on the city which he founded in Egypt and called by his name.

Alexandria—the city of Alexander—the gate of the East—the emporium of commerce—the school of critics—the mother of theology—what a long chapter of history has she appropriated to herself—what a multitude of eminent names has she boasted, from Ptolemy and Cleopatra to Napoleon and Mehemet Ali! And all this is the result of one man's thought. From the time when Alexandria was founded, the relation of Egypt to the world was entirely changed. The old policy of reserve and seclusion was abandoned. Here was the thoroughfare of trade and the home of science. Athens had found a rival of her literary fame; and Greek astronomers, geographers, physicians, and philosophers were sent forth from Egypt. The commercial greatness of Tyre and Carthage declined. Greeks were the agents in the transit of goods from the East. Greeks made the carrying-trade of the Levant their own. And this advantage they continued to maintain, even in the years of their social and political degradation, and (to borrow the image of the latest historian of Greece) long after they had fallen away from the orbit of their original glory, and become the satellites of a higher power.

III. Greece has now done her part in Universal History.

She has turned back the oriental invader from touching the Mediterranean. She has discovered and published all the latent power of the alphabet she learnt in her early youth. In her old age she has watched the dispersion of her children. And now the sceptre of the sea must pass on to the West.

The features of the picture become larger and more grand, as the ROMAN rises from his throne to take possession of the sea. An ominous shadow falls on the blue waters, where we have watched the Phœnician merchantmen boldly sailing, and the ships of the Greek Republics passing round the headlands. See how the shadow falls on half the Mediterranean. The same darkness involves in one moment both Corinth and Carthage. A few of those years, which are the moments of history, pass away; and the successors of Alexander have yielded up their kingdoms as provinces to Rome.

There is something in the very beginning of the first naval war in which the Romans engaged, characteristic of their desperate resolution to conquer difficulties and crush their enemies. Carthage, the daughter of Tyre, was in possession of supreme mercantile power in the western basin of the Mediterranean. Carthage interfered with the growing ambition of Rome, and Rome went boldly to war with her African rival. But Rome had no ships. Her citizens were well acquainted with the storms of the Forum, but had no experience of the storms of the sea. The peasants of Latium and the mountaineers of the Sabine hills had never fought on a deck, or handled an oar. What was to be done against the great line-of-battle ships of the Carthaginian navy? What would be thought by a London ship-builder of launching a vessel, the timber of which, two months before, was growing in the forest? What would be thought of practising on dry land for a Thames Regatta,—the crew

seated on benches ashore, and so learning to pull in time? Yet this was what the Romans did in the first Punic war. A Carthaginian ship ran ashore on the Italian coast; they used this vessel as their model; the timber was felled, the men were drilled; and in two months a hundred clumsy vessels were launched; and with these unseasoned timbers and these unskilful crews they put out to sea to fight the Carthaginians. So far they had been attempting to follow their rivals in the construction of their ships; but now I have to mention an idea of their own. To every vessel a kind of long drawbridge was attached, which could be hoisted up by a rope, so as to lie close to the mast, and, when an enemy's ship was within reach, could be suddenly let down on her deck, where it fastened itself by a great iron spike. Thus the two vessels were locked together in a desperate embrace; the struggle took place upon the bridge, the sea-fight was changed into a land-fight, and the Roman soldier was victorious over the Carthaginian sailor.

Nothing in the history of the Romans more vividly illustrates their natural repugnance to the sea, or the strength of their indomitable will. At the outset they were sorely puzzled by the Straits of Messina, and in the first Punic war all the shores of Sicily were strewed with their wrecks. But they pressed forward, and were successful. They landed their legions in Africa; they threw off the dreadful weight of Hannibal, and fulfilled the motto of their sternest citizens,—"Carthage must be destroyed."

I pass over much of that disastrous time when all Italy "shone o'er with civil swords," and I hasten to the close of the Republic. The events in the later Civil Wars, so far as they pertain to the mere nautical history of the Mediterranean, may be conveniently grouped round two men,—a father and a son,—Pompey the Great, who destroyed the pirates, and Sextus Pompeius, the admiral of a semi-piratical

fleet. Just before the first triumvirate we have an extraordinary account of the prevalence of piracy. "All the Mediterranean, from the Syrian coast to the Pillars of Hercules, was covered with privateers." They plundered the merchant-ships of Alexandria and Cadiz, and made descents on the coasts of Italy. Their strongholds were the cliffs and deep-sheltered bays on the coast of Asia Minor, especially in Cilicia. From these safe hiding places they came out with small vessels and enormous crews, like the prahus of the Malays and the Dyaks, and dispersed themselves in search of their prey. Pompey was put in command of the armament equipped against them; he chased them to their homes, and, by burning some thousands of their ships, secured a long period of safety and prosperity to the commerce of the Roman world.

Sextus Pompeius, in his relation to the second Triumvirate, is familiar to Englishmen through Shakspere's "Antony and Cleopatra." That which disturbed Antony, in his shameful life at Alexandria, was the news that

> "Sextus Pompeius
> Hath given the dare to Cæsar, and commands
> The empire of the sea."

His power in the Mediterranean was for some time really formidable, though his crews consisted in a great measure of Greeks and Asiatics, the sons of the pirates whom his father had destroyed. He was master of Sicily; and a fleet commanding that position must either be propitiated or defeated. The scene in the play, where he is visited by the Triumvirs, on board his admiral-ship at Misenum, will not be forgotten, How different might the history of the world have been, if Menodorus had cut that cable, and Pompey had carried out to sea those who were presently to be the rival combatants for an emperor's throne!

The rapid shifting of the scene in the early part of this play of "Antony and Cleopatra" symbolizes well the process of political concentration which was then going on, and the precipitation of all events towards Imperial Rome. First we are at Alexandria, then at Rome, then at Messina in Sicily, at Rome again, at Misenum on the Italian coast, on a Syrian plain, at Alexandria, at Athens, at Actium. There the critical battle was fought. The heavy ships of Antony, with their towers and high-built decks, like the decks of an American steam-boat, were defeated by the light Liburnian galleys of his adversary; and Augustus was lord of the Mediterranean and emperor of the world. I have hitherto spoken of Roman events merely in their naval character in reference to the sea. But it should be remembered that this empire was not simply a maritime dominion like the Phœnician, but a vast series of provinces, sweeping round the Inland Sea, which may be considered in one sense to have separated them, in another to have united them. It was not a mere dissemination of the seeds of civilized life on the coasts and the islands, such as we have seen was accomplished by the Greeks in their day; but it was a vast political unity, consolidated and kept together by the strong hand of power. Rome gave law to the world, as Tyre had given commerce, and Greece intellectual culture. Governors and judges were placed in every province, and all were immediately in communication with Rome. Military colonies were founded in the East and West, as at Philippi and Saragossa. A vast peace establishment was kept up in all parts to protect the frontier and silence the provincials. The obedience of the sea was not disregarded. The promontory of Italy divided and commanded the great lake which was the heart of the empire. One fleet was stationed at Misenum on one side, and another fleet at Ravenna on the other, with squadrons on more distant service in the Gulf

of Lyons and on the coasts of the Euxine. It was an age, in many respects, very like our own. It was an age of great cities, some of them still flourishing, like Milan and Seville, some of them decayed, like Antioch and Cæsarea—an age of busy commerce, when ships brought wool from Spain, and corn from Egypt—an age of great roads and (in some degree) of fashionable travelling—an age when wealthy Romans had large country houses and exquisite gardens in the fair open places of the Italian shore, and when the poor dwelt in close, crowded streets of the metropolis, full of pestilence and vice. Take away a few things which have been reserved for our convenience—take away the post-office, the newspaper, the steam-engine, the electric telegraph: add a few things from which we have been happily delivered,—the factories of slave-labour, the murderous shows of gladiators, the establishment of a false and profligate religion: put together these resemblances and contrasts, and remember, what to Christians is more than all history, all civilization—remember what took place at Jerusalem in the reign of Tiberius—remember the growth of the Gospel and the fall of Heathenism—and you have some idea of what the Roman empire was between the day when Augustus defeated Antony at Actium, and the day when Constantinople was founded at the portals of the East and West, and Christianity established round all the Mediterranean.

IV. Now we must leap over several centuries. The long confusion of barbarians in the Empire and heretics in the Church—the various modifications of political and ecclesiastical hierarchy—the succession of great Councils—the progress of the Goths in the West, and the Parthians in the East—the creation by the Vandals of a new Carthaginian navy, and its destruction by Belisarius,—all these

histories we must leave unnoticed. We must suppose that the lawyers have finished the code of Justinian—that the monks have written homilies of the Fathers over many a half-obliterated manuscript of Horace and Virgil—that the mystic leaves of the Arabian prophet have become the law of his fanatical warriors. The Papacy must be seated on its throne—the East and West divided—the flat cupola of St. Sophia become the model of church-building to all the dioceses of the Greeks—the cathedrals of the Latins already rising to their transparent clerestories and lofty pinnacles. We must break through all this intervening confusion (not because it is unimportant or inexplicable, but simply because we are in haste), and plunge at once into the heart of the middle ages. The scene before us is dark and confused, but as we gaze on it, the SARACEN AND CRUSADER come out into view, as the two forms which command the picture. The Cross and the Crescent are the two powers which struggle for the mastery of the Midland Sea.

Saracen and Crusader—this antithesis may be used as a formula to group and classify the events of the period, so far as they concern the Mediterranean. The meeting of all strange costumes in markets and bazaars—the interchange of presents and politeness between Charlemagne and Haroun Alraschid—gondolas by the Lido and minarets on the Nile—Franciscans and Dominicans on one side, Emirs and Dervishes on the other—Knights of the Temple and Knights of St. John, Turkish Janissaries and Egyptian Mamelukes;—all the romantic story of Spain, Granada, and the Cid, and the battle that rolled in alternate waves between the rock of Gibraltar and the mountains of Asturias;—all the struggle of the Greek empire, when province after province was contested and lost, till the Infidel took the city of Constantine;—and lastly, that singular meeting of Feudalism and Mahomedan-

ism in the island of Sicily, the memory of which startles the traveller as he looks at Arabic inscriptions on walls supported by arches of the Normans;—these are only particulars of the contrast which sums up the whole—the contrast of the Mosque and the Cathedral, of the Koran and the Breviary, the Crescent and the Cross.

One glance at the Crusades themselves must suffice us. They filled the period of two centuries, from the close of the eleventh to the close of the thirteenth; and in these two centuries we can contemplate the spirit of the Middle Age apart from its earlier confusion or its later decay. It was the age when the Papal power was at its height—the age of the perfection of Gothic architecture—the age of Dante—the age of Bernard the last of the Fathers, and Aquinas the greatest of the schoolmen. The first crusade was the French crusade. Jerusalem was taken at Midsummer, in the last year of the eleventh century; and for some time Palestine and Syria became like an Asiatic Europe. French feudalism had already made itself master of Britain in the Western Ocean, and Sicily in the Inland Sea; and now it appropriated and divided this eastern Holy Land; and the new titles which meet our eye within the borders of the Twelve Tribes and on the scenes of the Apostolic Journeys are such titles as these—Marquis of Tyre, Prince of Galilee, and Count of Joppa. In the second crusade the French were assisted by the Germans. It was a disastrous expedition. The most striking scenes I remember in what I have read of it, are those in which the Western hosts are described as losing their way in the mountains of Asia Minor, fainting under their heavy armour, cheated and misled by the Greeks, assailed and cut down at every step by the light activity of the Mahomedan horsemen. The third is the English crusade. What Englishman is not familiar with the adventures of Richard and Saladin? The fourth crusade brings us to

Venice. Venetian vessels, under the command of old Dandolo, conveyed the warriors down the long Adriatic. The result was not the rescue of the Holy Sepulchre, not the destruction of the Mussulman power, but the elevation of a Western emperor to the throne of Byzantium. The language of Paris was spoken at Athens, and French gentlemen built their castles in Greece and Macedonia. I hasten to the pathetic termination of these unfortunate expeditions—to Louis IX. and his noble-minded queen. Look here on the Egyptian coast—

> "Where Moslem spears are gleaming
> Round Damietta's towers,
> Though a Christian banner from her wall
> Waves free its Lily-flowers."

Royal Margaret is defending that city against the Saracen besiegers, her husband is in prison, and the child of her sorrows—

> "The boy whom she has born for woe,
> But never for disgrace,"

has seen the light in this beleaguered fortress. A cowardly hesitation seizes the defenders of the walls. They speak of capitulation—of safety. The Queen hears of it :—

> "The blood rushed through her pearly cheek,
> The sparkle to her eye—
> Now call me here those recreant knights!"

The strength of a gentle woman's heart nerved the arms of the faltering soldiers. They returned to their duty.—But scenes like this are momentary and transient. The doom of the Saracen was not yet come. Louis and Margaret are like two stars seen in one of the pauses of a black and stormy night; the clouds pass over them; the sky and the earth are dark; and when the morning comes, the Crescent is still there, high in the Mahomedan heaven.—It was on a Monday

morning, when St. Louis the Crusader, dying on the sands of Tunis,—Tunis, which once was Carthage,—"raised his clasped hands to heaven, and said, 'Gracious Lord, have mercy on this people who are sojourning here, and grant them a safe return, that they fall not into the enemy's hand, nor deny thy holy name.' The night before he died, as he was reposing, he sighed and said in a low voice, 'O Jerusalem! O Jerusalem!' This was the last of the Crusades. The Middle Age had now produced its ideal—its flower and its fruit,—and now it must die."

I am content thus to quote the words of a modern French historian. All Frenchmen write with enthusiasm (as indeed well they may) of Louis IX. Even Voltaire says that he died like a hero and a saint. You will perceive that it has formed no part of my plan to analyse the motives of the Crusaders or to dissect and criticise Medieval Christianity. I have wished to treat this period of the history of the Mediterranean as I have treated the Phœnician, the Greek, and the Roman periods—tracing (in the haste which the pressure of scanty space renders necessary) their broad features, and selecting in each case for the help of the memory some one thing which is characteristic and impressive. And I believe the same thread of thought which we held in the former periods will still guide us here. I believe that, here as well as there, we may behold in this Mediterranean Sea the scene of great transactions providentially intended to affect the whole human race. Look narrowly at the Crusaders, and you indeed see under the name of Christianity much that was false and abominable. But go up higher; take a wider view; and survey all this expanse of history, from the time when Charles Martel on that glorious field of France turnedback, the tide of Infidels which had rolled uninterruptedly from Arabia to Morocco, and from the Straits of Gibraltar to beyond the Pyrenees—to the time when John of Austria sank

the Turkish ships under the waves of Lepanto, and when (a hundred years later) those who looked from the Tower of St. Stephen at Vienna saw the Mussulmans in flight before John Sobieski—and include the Crusades in all the long intervening period of conflict, defeat, and victory—and you will see that they form no unimportant chapter of a momentous volume of universal history. This at least will be conceded by all, that the international activities excited by the Crusades have never been paralysed—that the channels of commercial communication have never since been closed—that the intellectual curiosity then awakened has never gone to sleep. It is surely something that we possess the science of the Arabian without his superstition: and you will not blame me if I express some thankfulness, that in English schools our text-book of religious instruction is the Bible, and not the Koran.

Here I must pause. For the breaking-up of the Middle Ages is the preparation of a new field of history. The chronological limit of our subject is evidently prescribed and marked off by those European and more than European changes,—the consolidation of the monarchies,—the revival of Letters,—the invention of Printing,—the Great Reformation,—which took place simultaneously with the *Oceanic Discoveries*. Henceforward the Mediterranean is no longer what it was before, the witness and the theatre of all great events. When Columbus saw the tropical ferns and flowers, and the new colours of the birds in the world beyond the Atlantic,—when Camöens watched the storms in the Indian seas, and drew from thence the painting of his immortal poem,—then the Inland Sea became in effect what in truth it had ever been, a lake of the mighty Ocean. We English and our brothers the Americans are apt to look upon it now with something of scorn, as a part only of that great watery

road which connects London with Bombay,—or, to speak more correctly, which connects Hong Kong with New York. We look on it as nothing in itself, but the resort of fashionable travellers, and the mild restorer of the health of invalids. Not that we entirely forget some remarkable passages of modern history, such as the siege of Gibraltar and the battle of the Nile, the day when Lord Exmouth anchored the old "Charlotte" under the guns of Algiers, or the bay of Navarino, or the battlements of Acre! Not that we forget the expedition which Charles X. was preparing in 1829, or that long series of French Generals who have been educated since that time in the campaigns of Northern Africa. Not that we *can* forget all we heard and felt, day by day, in the two long years which came after that cold February morning in 1854, when the Grenadier Guards first went to the Crimean War. During those two years at least the Mediterranean continued to excite some daily attention with a considerable portion of mankind. One name too, the most prominent in London during the present year, I need not remind you, is a Mediterranean name. I need not tell you that Palermo and Naples, and also Aspromonte, are on the shores of that sea. Next year our eyes will all be turned to Florence. But still the interest which we take in the problems, which may soon possibly be solved in Central Italy, is not because they are local, but because they are universal. We feel that the Mediterranean is not now what it was. Its glory is departed. That new power, which has changed and is changing all our social and even our international relations, has done more perhaps than anything else to break down the isolation, and destroy the individuality, of the Mediterranean Sea. I believe the first steamboat appeared in its waters in the year 1824. Its name was the "Robert Fulton;" and it was sent from Boston to aid the Greeks in their struggle against the Turks. How remarkable is this

fact! The Republic of an undiscovered continent sends across an unexplored ocean a vessel moving without sails to aid the patriots of Greece against their Asiatic foe. Place yourself in the age of Leonidas and Miltiades, and it sounds as fabulous as the Argonautic voyage.

> "Alter erit nunc Tiphys, et altera quæ vehat Argo
> Delectos heroas."

But I am not here as a schoolmaster for the purpose of quoting Latin. I will now, in concluding, ask you kindly to remember that to-night we have only taken a general and connected view of a large number of varied and most alluring topics—that this has been simply an introduction on my part to an imaginary (I hope a real) course of reading on yours. I have endeavoured only to point out the leading divisions of the subject. The Phœnicians, the Greeks, the Romans, the Saracen and the Crusader, these (if I may use so fanciful a metaphor) are the parallels of our latitude. The Egyptian and the Etrurian, the Carthaginian, the Vandal and the Venetian, these are the meridians of our longitude. Within the spaces formed by the intersection of these historic lines, many pleasant voyages might be made, not without profitable returns of solid instruction and of varied treasures for poetic and religious thought. Old facts become new when placed in new associations; and perhaps a schoolmaster may be allowed to say to the younger members of this patient and obliging audience,—that they will find the facts of History more tractable, more amusing, and more easily remembered, if they will do their best to combine them with the romance of Geography.

Thomas Chalmers.

A LECTURE

BY

THE REV. JOHN CAIRNS, D.D.

THOMAS CHALMERS.

Dr. Chalmers needs no fresh annalist or critic. His life by Dr. Hanna is one of the masterpieces of full-length biography; and the briefer sketches of Hugh Miller, John Brown, Isaac Taylor, David Masson, and many others hardly less conspicuous, have added to the blaze of its illumination. To re-write the story of a career so well known would be useless, and in this space hopeless: to set forth a new or deeper estimate of its worth and meaning presumptuous. I shall only attempt some scattered notices and rapid criticisms, proper to a passing lecture addressed to young men. The grandeur of the figure can hardly be abated by any treatment, and each fresh attempt to seize it gains something from that later point of survey, which, in the case of all great and epoch-making characters, is given with the very lapse of time. Time, indeed, has not yet done, in this instance, all its work. The life of Chalmers touches on living and excited controversies. But these do not interfere with its Catholic interest; and, so far as it is necessary to speak of them here, they need not provoke strife, but only widen sympathy and enlarge forbearance.

The first and pervading impression caught from the life of Dr. Chalmers is that of *greatness*. Of this, the outward

signs are sufficiently striking. A native of the decayed Fife sea-port of Anstruther, born in 1780, and buried, apparently, in one of the obscurest corners of the same county as the minister of Kilmany, he comes forth, about his thirtieth year, to startle and convulse all Scotland with a new and electrical pulpit eloquence, which provokes from Scotland's greatest critic, Lord Jeffrey, a frequent comparison with Demosthenes, and equally subdues hearers like Mackintosh and Canning in London. He grapples for eight years with the gigantic home-mission work of two successive parishes in Glasgow, visiting neglected parishioners by the thousand, and making immense experiments in pauperism and evangelistic agency, yet retaining by honest effort his towering popularity, and laying himself open to the invasions of society on a scale unprecedented. He migrates to St. Andrews as Professor of Moral Philosophy, and kindles in another field the old enthusiasm, which he sustains as Professor of Divinity in Edinburgh for twenty years. He produces his Bridgewater Treatise, with writings on political economy, ethics, and theology, making five-and-twenty published volumes, with half as many more unpublished. He becomes the apostle of Church Extension in Scotland, and creates 200 new churches, at an expense of £300,000. He defends church establishments in London, amidst admiring princes of the blood, peers, bishops, and ministers of state. He fights the great battle of Non-Intrusion, and carries half the General Assembly with him into the Free Church. None but a great and leading mind—a mind great in many attributes and in many dimensions—could have achieved the vast and varied work implied in this simple enumeration.

In all this greatness there was *originality*. The very combination of powers usually separated gave his life a visible freshness and novelty. As of himself, he said, that he was the only man living who had been in one day on

the top of Boston Stump and Lincoln Cathedral; and, as we may add, that probably no other man of his time had been on the top of all the cathedrals in England, so hardly any, if any, of his contemporaries united gifts and qualities so diverse and apparently irreconcilable. An intellect essentially and characteristically scientific, keen and fresh in observation, but instinctively reaching out to the widest laws and generalizations, and armed with the mathematical powers that open the secrets of the physical universe, was in him allied as in Plato, Descartes, Pascal, Leibnitz, and Kant, with that faculty of metaphysical speculation which broods over the ultimate data of mind, and still more with that intuition of moral genius which sounds the depths of human nature and the destinies of human society. He was thus a mathematician, a mental analyst, a moral philosopher, and a political economist, all in one, with a capacity of intellectual delight in all these fields amounting to a passion; and an imagination that ranged over them at will, and illustrated one by the wonders of another, while its inspiration was continually renewed by familiarity with the *ipsa corpora* of nature, at home with the tender and the beautiful, but revelling in the vast and the sublime. These great gifts of intelligence and imagination might have made a philosopher or a poet, had they been lodged in a calmer temperament, or a purely idealizing spirit. But through a singularity of constitution, almost without parallel, they became the mere instrum nts and handmaids of more urgent sympathies and intense convictions, that turned the man of science and fancy into the man of work and conflict, made Plato and Newton give place to Socrates and Paul, and ended the development of the *savant* and the idealist in that of the orator, the reformer, the missionary, and, if need were the martyr. While practice thus carried it over speculation, the vanquished in some sense gave law to the

victor. The pulpit, the church-court, the mission-field, with their appropriate topics, were brought into unwonted juxtaposition with the French Institute and the British Association. The stars in their courses fought against infidelity. The Veto law was a new case of the problem of the Three Bodies. Territorial missions were illustrated by "parallelograms." And the planet Jupiter, "made up of infinitesimals," cast a fostering ray on the Sustentation Fund and the stipend of the minister of Ballahulish. These flights and sallies of what, to ordinary minds seemed transcendentalism, were reined in by keen sagacity, and tempered by stern devotion to the hardest work. This fine ethereal nature could outdrudge and out-slave the dullest: and show for once that Pegasus could be yoked and harnessed in wain or plough. Absorption in great principles, matched with interest in the minutest details; exquisite sensibility, with leonine courage; the sturdiest independence with a statesman-like adaptation to times and circumstances; addiction almost inordinate to favourite ideas and modes of speech, with a candid and self-renouncing openness to the light of experience; these all deepen the impression of originality as well as of greatness; to which it is interesting to add, that while a Scotchman of the Scotch—Scotch in his physiognomy, dialect, humour, metaphysics, and glowing nationality of feeling, civil and religious, Chalmers rises more than almost any other, on the light wing of genius and Christian large-heartedness, into the open heaven of truth and charity, and acts as a recognized centre of catholicity, not only on English but on world-wide literature and religion.

In the total impression of Chalmers' life, grand and striking as is the spectacle, *goodness* outweighs greatness—goodness of the most pure and Christian type. I seriously question, so far as it is given to man to judge, whether a more eminent Christian has lived in the nineteenth century;

and in the long and glorious roll of Christian excellence, the names are but few and far between to which one is tempted to assign the palm. I do not speak of accuracy of mere belief, though that was in its great substance eminently scriptural, happy in the equipoise of its doctrinal and practical parts, and rightly adjusted to the lessons of natural theology on the one side, and to the impulses of natural sentiment on the other. Nor do I speak of great public services rendered to the Christian cause; for the advocate, the preacher, and the administrator does not always shine in the blaze of his own victory. I speak of the essential and vital elements of Christian piety which make up the saint, as distinguished from the sage or scholar; and which, in the case of Chalmers, as in all the highest public men of the Christian commonwealth, have preceded and determined all the rest. His faith, assisted by his vivid imagination, was a constant realizing of that great world into which what he adored as a miracle of grace had led the way. He could truly cite this text as the record of his every-day experience: "My soul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy judgments at all times." And yet with the most profound humility—a humility which was too genuine to appear in protestations to man and not in confessions to God—he daily lamented his radical ungodliness; and his most frequent complaint is, that God is not in his thoughts. His diaries and journals, his letters to his most intimate friends, and the sudden gushes of devotion in his daily and Sabbath studies of the Bible, reveal a spirit instinct to the core with Christian influence; the all-pervading grace of humility being associated as always with the two other most distinctive graces of zeal and love—zeal for the glory of his Redeemer, for which everything human was counted loss, and love to the souls of men, especially the outcast and neglected, which glowed within him as the very incarnation of the

spirit of Christ. Amid every kind of test, flattery and obloquy, dazzling successes and crushing disappointments, the pure gold of Christian simplicity and godly sincerity shines untarnished; and we cannot but say that his own lofty strain, in bidding farewell to the pulpit, is maintained to his dying hour: "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget its cunning!" What a Christian utterance amidst the eager prosecution of researches in pauperism: "I should count the salvation of a single soul of more value than the deliverance of a whole empire from pauperism!" What a singleness of eye to the highest ends, when, amidst the triumph of his own schemes, he exclaimed: "Who cares about the Free Church, compared with the Christian good of the people of Scotland? Who cares about any Church but as an instrument of Christian good?" What a pathetic burst of Christian patriotism and philanthropy, which could sing its *Nunc Dimittis* when the Communion table was for the first time set up with one hundred communicants around it, excavated from the heathenism of the West Port: "This is the most joyful event of my life. God has indeed heard my prayer, and I could now lay down my head in peace and die!" The pure Christian style of Chalmers' religion was enhanced by the absence of everything strained, ascetic, and artificial. The love of nature, of letters, of society, above all, the most tender and beautiful domestic life, ran parallel with his incessant work in his Master's vineyard, and with those unworldly aspirations which made him confess that he was "a stranger and a pilgrim on the earth." I will not canonize even one of the greatest of saints, but it is my deliberate conviction that a character with so little dross of imperfection and infirmity, in conjunction with so much transcendent genius and piety, has rarely arisen amidst the earlier or later developments of Christianity; and this production—this living epistle—to

my mind even more valuable than any works or monuments of another kind, will bear the longest and most effectual witness to the superhuman origin of the Gospel, and to the sovereignty of that grace of God which—in men like Paul, Baxter, Wesley, and Chalmers—utterly departs from the ordinary type of human character and makes all things new.

The conversion in which this Christian character originated—the great and decisive epoch in Chalmers' life—is one of the most interesting on record. It occurred about 1810, when he was in his thirtieth year, and had been already seven years a parish minister, and when his mind was in its full strength, and his earlier convictions and habits had reached their maturity. To many, to most in the Church of Scotland, in his day, he seemed to need no conversion. His strong sense of natural religion, which in his College career at St. Andrews had attracted the townspeople to hear his prayers, and which had wrapt him for months together in an admiring contemplation of the power and greatness of God, had not died out. His later doubts, infused by the pernicious "Système de la Nature,"—a work which would resolve the universe into material development and mechanical law,—had given place; and the external evidences of Christianity, gathered up in Butler's "Analogy," had, in his own words, "made a Christian of him." He preached a Christianity which is still from many pulpits, if not in Scotland, yet elsewhere, delivered as orthodox—that the work of Christ is in some unexplained way connected with the remission of sins; that it opens the path to a happy immortality; but that every man must work out his own title to the blessing by piety and charity, looking to Christ's mediation only to repair his own deficiencies. "Let us tremble," says he, in his earlier preaching, "to think that anything but virtue can recommend us to the

Almighty." "The real nature of the Christian service consists in gratefully adoring the Supreme Being, and in diffusing the blessed influences of charity, moderation, and peace." It was the ordinary Moderate theology, which had reigned in Scotland for more than half a century, but which in Chalmers clothed itself with a fervour and an eloquence alien to its nature, and made him long and labour among his parishioners, for that practical reformation on which alone it insisted. His very earnestness on his own side led him to denounce the Evangelical doctrines "as the unintelligible jargon of pretended knowledge," and even to pray in public for the deliverance of their adherents from "fanaticism." Nor did he preach a morality which he did not illustrate, for his personal character was frank, truthful, generous in a conspicuous degree; and his pastoral attentions to his flock, though limited, displayed a heartiness which secured not a little of their regard and affection. He had risen above the eccentricities of his earlier ministry, when he only saw Kilmany amidst the hurry of volunteer lectures in St. Andrews, on mathematics and chemistry. He was admired in the General Assembly; and had even received the important commission from Sir David Brewster, as editor of the *Edinburgh Encyclopædia*, to write in it the article on "Christianity," the future leader of the Evangelical party, Dr. Andrew Thomson, giving way in his favour. Might not then such a man have said, "What lack I yet?" and is not the strong term "conversion," as applied to him, a party exaggeration? No one will say so, who understands the Christian religion; least of all would Dr. Chalmers himself have borne the suppression of this emphatic word. He speaks of himself as having experienced in this crisis "a very great transition of sentiment," "a great revolution in all his opinions about Christianity," and he also laments that his heart had not been right with

God; for reviewing his life, at the close of his thirtieth year, he uses words like these: "For the greater part of the last fifteen years there has been a total estrangement of my mind from religious principle; and my whole conduct has been dictated by the rambling impulse of the moment, without any direction from a sense of duty, or any reference to that eternity which should be the end and the motive of all our actions." His lectures on morality, which had made no impression on his parishioners, had made as little, in the deepest sense, on himself. He was living for time, and not for eternity; and his chief idol was still literary ambition, for whose glittering prizes he panted, labouring to show, by his elaborate work on "National Resources" (published just before this date), and by his continued mathematical studies, that the "malignant touch of ordination" had not exiled him from them for ever. God took His own way to recall this wandering spirit, whom we see hitherto, amid all the brilliancy of genius and the splendour of opening fame, out of harmony with all that is most vital in Christianity—out of harmony with all that was deepest in the religion of Scotland—out of harmony, too, with the simple-hearted piety of his father's house. That house was repeatedly and suddenly overshadowed with calamity. A brother and sister died of the same disease, but died in their parents' faith; and two sisters were equally threatened. An uncle, who had been as a second father to him, was suddenly caught away, in the attitude of prayer. Personal illness succeeded,—so severe, that it confined him for many months, and made him hang as on the brink of the grave. He awoke as from a dream to the nothingness of time and the magnitude of eternity; and the right book was at hand to confirm the impression. "I have been reading Pascal's 'Thoughts on Religion.' You know his history: a man of the richest endowments, and whose youth was signalized by his profound and original speculations in

mathematical science, but who could stop short in the brilliant career of discovery—who could resign all the splendours of literary reputation—who could renounce, without a sigh, all the distinctions which are conferred upon genius, and resolve to devote every talent and every hour to the defence and illustration of the Gospel. This, my dear sir, is superior to all Greek and to all Roman fame." Like Pascal, he would now himself defend Christianity. But did he understand it? The preparations for his article on Christianity, carried on in the shaded sick-room, opened up startling gleams of light. Was it the Christianity which he had heard expounded from the lecture-rooms of St. Andrews, and seen exalted to the high places of Moderatism, that could inspire the primitive Christians to face death and smile on martyrdom? The article was a bridge over a deep river, landing in a region as yet unknown. There was treasure in the field, which he had undertaken to defend; but he had not found it; or if he had, he had not yet paid the price. He must become a Christian of that sublimer mould, and work out the problem, with God and His law and eternity stedfastly in view. Hence, a series of struggles and aspirations after holy obedience continued for months, which leave their deep mark on the whole man. His journals record the intensity of the effort, and show how he kept watch over his spirit, how he set his house in order, omitting family prayer now for no company; and how he strove to impress his new convictions upon others. When he returned to the Kilmany pulpit, in weakness and languor, there was the sense of a seriousness unfelt before; and the world to come cast an awful shadow over every sermon. His Bible was seen to be constantly in his hands; and a visitor having remarked the change, was met by the reply: "All too little, John—all too little." These prolonged efforts to work out a righteousness by the law, as in

the great example of Luther, totally failed. They deepened the sense of sin, and gave a more commanding grandeur to the Saviour's atonement: but they all left the question of acceptance with God as perplexing and harassing as ever. "For," says Dr. Chalmers, many years afterwards, "during this course, I got little satisfaction, and felt no repose." At length the deliverance came from this spirit of bondage and of fear; and it came through that doctrine of justification by grace—the profoundest mystery of Christianity—which is so stumbling to the pride of human reason, that it needs to be discovered afresh in every age and in every instance. No part of Chalmers' history is so intensely interesting. "I remember," says he, "that somewhere about the year 1811, I had Wilberforce's 'Practical View of Christianity' put into my hands; and as I got on reading it, felt myself on the eve of a great revolution in all my opinions about Christianity. I am now most thoroughly of opinion—and it is an opinion founded on experience—that on the system of 'Do this and live,' no peace, and even no true and worthy obedience, can ever be attained: it is 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.'" "The deep views," he adds, "that Wilberforce gives of the depravity of our nature—of our need of an atonement—of the great doctrine of acceptance through that atonement—of the sanctifying influences of the Spirit: these all give a new aspect to a man's religion; and I am sure that, in as far as they are really and honestly proceeded upon, they will give a new direction to his habits and his history. . . . . The doctrines of the Bible, I well remember, I then saw in an altogether new light; and could feel a power and preciousness in passages which I formerly read with heedlessness, and even with disgust." The work which the grace of God thus made decisive fell into his hands in the interval between a sister's death and funeral, as if death would complete what death

had begun ; and the scene was Anstruther, as if the same place would witness his natural and spiritual birth. The work of Wilberforce was one of a class which his father delighted in, but which the son had denounced from the pulpit : "When you are reading Newton's Sermons, and Baxter's 'Saint's Rest,' and Doddridge's 'Rise and Progress,' where do Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John go to?" The first of these works comforted a dying brother—the earliest of the series linked with this conversion ; and the other two books, also, were connected with the hour of his soul's agony and deliverance ; for Baxter, more than any other man, inspired Doddridge ; and Doddridge, in turn, quickened Wilberforce. This is the true apostolical succession ; and who can tell where it will end ? It may be added, that in successive centuries, three great religious movements start from the same personal experience in regard to justification. The first is that of Martin Luther; the second is that of John Wesley ; the third is that of Thomas Chalmers.

The conversion of Chalmers explains his whole life, which is but made up of streams and radiations from it. He lays aside his mathematics, forgetful no more, as he so nobly confessed he had been, of the true science of quantity, which teaches the littleness of time and the magnitude of eternity. Entries like this occur in his journal :—"Now that I have got well, let me devote a great part of my time to the business of my parish." The sick are now not only visited, but prayed with ; and the former ignorance which counted one day or even a fragment of a day sufficient for the pulpit, is renounced in the prayer,—"O God, let me give my whole life to Thy service and to the preparation of a people for eternity." As he becomes firmer in what he calls the "peculiar doctrines," he urges them in correspondence and in conversation.

Here is a sample: "Fell in with David Wilkie, the eminent painter, at Cupar. . . . I tried to impress my peculiar views on Mr. D. Wilkie." All his own relatives are thus talked with or written to out of the fulness of his heart; and so, also, his favourite tutor in mathematics, Dr. James Brown, concerning whom we thus read: "Let me write him a full and a firm testimony. I pray, O God, for his peculiar Christianity." We see the same overflowing earnestness in the most faithful letters on personal religion addressed, at a later day, to Sir Robert Peel and the Duc de Broglie.

But it was in his ministrations to his own people that the change was most manifest. He did not indeed, as rumour gave out, recant his errors from the pulpit, and publish his personal experience. But he returned to the texts which had been handled amiss to cast over them the broad light of an evangelical testimony, and with an earnestness, which could not be surpassed, to exalt the righteousness of Christ, received by simple faith, as the sole ground of pardon and fountain of holiness; and to urge home the acceptance of the universal and unconditional offer of that righteousness made in the Gospel as a duty preceding and including every other obligation. He spoke from a depth of inward peace thus mirrored in his journal,—"Had more intimate communion with God in solitary prayer than I had ever felt before; and my sentiment was a total, an unreserved, and a secure dependence on Christ the Saviour. Oh may I enjoy His cross, and may it be all my glory! May I view every spiritual blessing as the effect of union with Him by faith. He is laid before me as the one and the effectual Mediator. We are not only invited, but commanded to believe. Help our unbelief, O God; dissolve our hardness: enter into our hearts." The Spirit of grace whom he thus invoked enabled him to speak with the power of a burning

eloquence, which caught and kindled in hearts that had been frozen under all the years of his legal ministrations. The flame spread to neighbouring parishes, and auditors were attracted from Dundee, from St. Andrews, and even from Edinburgh. Wonder, and in some cases offence, followed the crowds that streamed into the sequestered valley, and besieged the scanty church. But the crowds increased from month to month; and these Kilmany sermons, rich with the baptism of a recently found Gospel, continued, when used from time to time, to be the most effectual in his whole ministry.

A prodigious commotion ensued, which we need to go back to that dark age and dark region to understand. Moderatism, worldliness, ungodliness,—all rose up against the new evangelist. The old taunt was ready, "He hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him?" He had been mad on mathematics, botany, and chemistry; he was now in a new frenzy, and it would soon give place. But he boldly took up the Cross, supported by the sympathies of the remnant whom Moderatism had not deadened; supported by the Evangelical Dissent which had not been without influence on his own conversion; supported by the leaders of the revival in the Scottish Church, and by the returning energies of British Christianity. He threw himself into the ranks of the Bible Society, and his published sermon for it, preached in Dundee, was the first monument to the world of his great change. He brought himself into line with Sydney Smith's "consecrated cobblers," and received Andrew Fuller and a deputation from the Baptist Mission. This was then the *ne plus ultra* of sacrifice. No record of those times can so vividly recall the great and terrible wilderness, which needed a new Moses to smite the rock in it, as the confession even of Chalmers, "I am still ashamed of the testimony of

Christ, and would have felt this had I walked the streets of Cupar with the missionaries."

The translation of Chalmers to Glasgow, in 1815, and his seven years' ministry there, had results which were immense and incalculable. He was in the zenith of his powers; he had completed the cycle of his new discoveries; he was stirred by the advance of the rising Evangelism in one of its ancient seats, which but waited his mighty impulse to set in like a flood. He gave the movement commanding literary position, abounding hopefulness of tone, and the impetus of aggression which in every crisis is half the victory. His "Astronomical Discourses," prepared, some of them amidst the hurry of a tour in Fife, and written by fragments from morning to morning, shot through the educated mind not only of Glasgow, but of Scotland and of Britain, with the rapidity of lightning. His "Commercial Discourses" confirmed the impression; and his ordinary sermons, drawing not so much from science or political economy as from his vivid insight into Bible truth, his mastery of human nature, and the all-pervading glance and touch of genius, and delivered with a passion and a vehemence to exceed which would be frenzy, riveted every hearer, and swept along all ranks and classes in a tumult of agitation. It is a mistake, however, to suppose that the preaching of Chalmers was declamatory or theatrical. It was, on the contrary, intellectual and abstract in its leading thoughts, and fitter for the educated than the uneducated, resembling in this the style of Robert Hall; while its popular elements were found in its affinity to universal Christian experience, its kindling strokes of imagination, and its tempest and whirlwind of passionate earnestness. The delivery of such discourses to such crowds, with such impressions, must have been one of the highest raptures of Christian oratory; and the whole soul of the preacher evidently lived along the line of its own

vibrations. But never did he stop with applause or mere excitement. He felt the danger, and constantly prayed against it. Here is a specimen. "Preached to the magistrates. Vanity—violent exertion prompted by vanity—a preaching of self—a want of singleness of aim after the glory of God. O my heavenly Father, sweep away these corruptions, and enable me to struggle with them." The love of souls was thus the bright unshaken centre of his stupendous popularity. The loftiest excursions of eloquence only gave momentum to the appeal which descended on the conscience, and shattered every plea and every argument against immediate return to God. Such preaching did for Glasgow what the parallel but different labours of Dr. Andrew Thomson did for Edinburgh. In the West the victory—to which, doubtless in both cases, others within and without the Establishment contributed—was perhaps more complete; and its great capital, one of the chief centres of Evangelism in the empire, bears to this day the indelible trace of the ministry of Chalmers.

Once only had I the distant chance of judging what this world-renowned eloquence must have been in its prime from a specimen of later years, when the pulpit had been long relinquished. It was at the opening of an extension church in the suburbs of Edinburgh, about the year 1839. The place was crowded, but the limited chapel seemed ill adapted to the vaster effects of eloquence. The text was his favourite one, "Fury is not in me," which happened also to be the last from which he ever preached. He had not proceeded far when the whole audience was quelled, and seemed to sway hither and thither in response to his words. Perhaps it was the result of my own impression, but, as he advanced, they appeared to cower and almost to divide, as if his hand were parting them asunder, till, amidst a tremendous description of the possible effects of the fury of God, I could have

thought that the judgment was set and the books opened, and every hearer, in obedience to a resistless impulse, about, by some visible movement, to rank himself among the sheep or the goats.

The other great and lasting effect of Dr. Chalmers' Glasgow ministry was the creative impulse given by it to Home Missions. With these no name in the roll of Christian philanthropy is so thoroughly identified as his. He acted indeed formally only as a parish minister. He mapped out no town or province for his labours, and founded no general society. But in dealing with the ignorance, profligacy, and religious destitution of two neglected and overgrown parishes, he virtually anticipated the whole developments of half a century, and planted the germ of city missions, territorial churches, ragged schools, theatre services, Bible women, and whatever else distinguishes our own times. The labours of these seven years, first in the Tron parish of 11,000 souls, and then in St. John's, almost as populous—the poorest in Glasgow, and selected as the theatre of the hardest experiment—read like romance. How he visited repeatedly in each parish every house, addressing the collected inmates, sometimes by hundreds, with extemporaneous fervour, in the evenings; how he multiplied Sabbath-schools on the local principle, and founded and superintended day-schools at the expense of thousands of pounds, persuading even the Romanist authorities to allow the teaching of the Bible in his mixed classes; how, above all, he gathered and held in hand the most multiform and miscellaneous agency, drawn in many cases from the fruits of his own ministry, and filling up every sphere of lay activity, to say nothing of the higher genius of Edward Irving,—all this can only be glanced at; but its impression is seen at this day over the whole world of Christian labour. Even the least permanently successful of his enterprises—his great St. John's experiment

in pauperism—though it has not influenced Scotland to abandon or even to keep stationary a compulsory poor-rate, has not been in vain ; and it contains many beautiful lessons on the spontaneity of Christian almsgiving, and the duty of the Christian Church to the poor, which are destined to be revived and remembered when the love of the Gospel has left the reign of law behind. The works of Chalmers in the home mission-field have not been more influential than his winged words. Who has not heard his pithy phrases to the effect that we must "excavate the Gallowgate and the Cowgate ;" that the Church of Christ is to be "not only a centre of attraction, but a centre of aggression ;" and that "a house-going minister makes a church-going people !" It was his heart's deepest wish to make Scotland, as he said, "an experimental garden," with all its moral wastes reclaimed , and whenever that day comes, the memory of his own labours, from the Tron parish to the West Port, will surround his name with a richer crown than all eloquence and all theological distinction.

It was to many, if not to most, an unwelcome change when Dr. Chalmers, in 1823, relinquished his Glasgow pulpit, and became Professor of Moral Philosophy in St. Andrews. To this day, there rise up features of contrast between the one sphere and the other which recall Elijah at the brook Cherith. Dr. Chalmers seems at times himself, during his five years' solitude, to have been haunted by some such comparison. Still he was justified to himself, not only by the failure of his health, but by his high and constant idea of the pre-eminence of a University chair over a pulpit ; and we can see from the event how important a part this interval of comparative repose played in the development of his future history. He had so far worked out one seam, and needed to open another. His intellectual nature required some change of exercise, and some scene of

meditation for the working out and completion of all his deepest and most cherished views in mental and moral science, and in natural and Christian theology. He thus prepared himself for his more widely influential post as Professor of Divinity in the metropolis, which occupied the last twenty years of his life, and for the permanent contributions which he left to philosophical and Christian literature. Without going here into any of the special doctrines which he promulgated from his St. Andrews' chair, and which have some importance in the development of the Scottish philosophy of mind, it is enough to signalize the just relation in which he placed ethics to mental philosophy, as a separate and independent science, and the great service which he rendered in emphatically protesting against the common treatment of it as complete without borrowing from Christianity, and carrying up all its vital problems to a higher oracle. The enthusiasm which he kindled among his students was remarkable, and not less the missionary impulse which many of them received. In a career like that of Dr. Duff (to mention no others), the influence has gone to the farthest East, and through the world.

The Edinburgh labours of Dr. Chalmers, as a divinity professor, fifteen years in the Establishment and four in the Free Church, rank with the most fruitful and important of his whole life. In the one case, they completed the triumph of Evangelism in the Church of Scotland, by filling its pulpits with zealous adherents of that section; in the other, they gave a tone to the theology of a new denomination, already composed to a large extent of his own pupils. Many students also of other denominations attended his prelections, and enjoyed alike the charm and the impulse of his personal intercourse. How many of his pupils received from him not only a mental but a spiritual awakening, will never be known. His place in the theology of Scotland was thus

most influential; and though a full examination of this, or of his strictly theological writings, is not suitable to this lecture, I cannot pass from the subject without some brief remarks, more especially as the theological standing and influence of Chalmers have been much less discussed than other aspects of his character and history. While it cannot be maintained that Dr. Chalmers reached the first rank of theologians in respect of his mastery of the sacred languages, or his familiarity with systems of divinity in their original sources, or as affected by the action and reaction of controversy, he undoubtedly did so in respect of his comprehension of the whole sum and substance of theological discussion, and of his independent and vigorous criticism of every separate issue. His profound Christian experience, his intimate knowledge of the pith and marrow of the Bible, his command of physical and ethical science, the very robustness of his sense and sagacity, and the largeness and expansion of his nature, made his one of the great minds that gather up the results of a past development, and reproduce it with a new stamp and impress. He did not alter Christianity (for he believed it to be unalterable), but he adjusted its relations to sciences like geology, and to forms of unbelief like Atheism and Deism, before the current Pantheism had arisen. He did not dilute Scottish Calvinism (for he found the substance of it in the Bible), but he exhibited it in its analogies to the mysteries of natural causation and moral government, and he loved to set it in harmony with those great truths of a sufficient salvation and a free Gospel offer, which are common to it with all theologies that deserve the name of Evangelical. Many fine examples of acuteness and strength of intellect occur in his handling of celebrated theses, as, for example, that of Hume on Miracles, and that of Clarke on the Being of God; and his Notes on his text-books—Butler, Paley, and Hill—were models of brief and suggestive criticism. Here and there

his cautions were exceedingly valuable,—as, for example, against the exaggerated view of human depravity, which denies all natural virtue in man toward man, and does not, as it ought, place the essence of the evil in aversion to God, and also against a too scholastic and materalized conception of the Trinity. With his great contemporary, Sir William Hamilton, as with Butler, he preferred a "learned ignorance" to the hasty solution of many problems left by Revelation unsettled; and he also coincided with Schleiermacher, apparently without knowing it and with much discordance in other points, in making Christian experience and the necessities of practice, rather than the high *priori* road of logical deduction, the starting point of Biblical theology. His acceptance of the infallible product of inspiration, while dismissing all theories as to its mode, was another proof of his sober-mindedness; and the same may be said of his ultimate justice to the internal evidence of Christianity against the undue depreciation of it in his earlier treatises and sermons. No competent judge will deny to Chalmers a high and permanent place among the theologians that are at once attractive and solid, liberal and orthodox; though possibly the style, with its occasional uncouthness and too frequent repetition, as well as the elevation of the thought above the popular mark, may somewhat limit his readers. These observations apply with nearly equal force to his writings on political economy. Their special doctrines are here beyond us; but no one can sufficiently admire the courage and unsparing earnestness with which, from every topic, he fetches a fresh illustration of their great truth, indeed the great truth of his life long testimony, that morals are the soul of economics, and that the Gospel of Christ alone has healing for the nations.

The remaining passages of the public life of Dr. Chalmers all centre in two great and contemporaneous movements—the

Church Extension enterprise, and the Non-Intrusion Controversy in the Church of Scotland. As a leader of public opinion, his chief efforts till now had been made in the General Assembly in connection with the abolition of pluralities, and outside of it in the advocacy of Catholic emancipation. Now, the decease of Dr. Andrew Thomson brought him singly to the front; and the continued advance of the Evangelical party, with the outburst of the Voluntary controversy in Scotland, determined the character of the agitation in which he was destined to pass ten of the most laborious and anxious years of his life. On this period I must touch very lightly; for the nature of this platform, and the conflicting views among the supporters of this Association as to the right relation of Church and State, prescribe great caution and tenderness. But I cannot wholly omit such vital and integral parts of Chalmers' history.

Even when the Voluntary controversy had shaken Scotland for some years to its centre, Dr. Chalmers, with his characteristic courage and energy, did not despair of seeing his favourite parochial system extended by new churches and fresh endowments, to the neglected parts of the country. In the arguments of the controversy he took no part, till the delivery of his London lectures, in 1837; but three years before, his scheme of Church extension, embracing an appeal to the people for building funds and to the Government for endowments, was already in operation. How the Dissenters resisted—how a commission was appointed to ascertain the statistics of destitution, and how the Government ultimately did nothing,—all this, with the pleas and grievances on both sides, may be left here unrecorded at greater length. I follow Chalmers here with less sympathy than in other parts of his career, sharing, as is natural, even after the lapse of more than twenty years, something of the Dissenters' view of that movement. But it is impossible not to

admire the patriotic and Christian spirit with which, it may be, not without a certain impatience of contradiction. the long-cherished design was started and adhered to; the gigantic efforts of mind and body by which it was sustained, the unfaltering confidence with which, when State help failed, the resources of voluntary liberality were challenged into manifestation; and the striking result achieved of 200 Churches (one-fifth of the whole Establishment) added in ten years to the number, and at an expense of more than a quarter of a million sterling. These efforts have indeed been far surpassed in later fruits of Christian zeal with which the name of Chalmers is also associated; but they were till their own day unprecedented; and there can be no doubt that he was trained in the one school for the struggles and successes of the other. These Extension churches are now all in the hands of the Establishment, from which Dr. Chalmers broke away; having also been partially endowed by a repetition, in the hands of Dr. James Robertson, of the voluntary effort which called them forth. There cannot be a better wish for them, than that they may serve the great cause of home evangelization for which Dr. Chalmers laboured to create them; and perhaps it is not beyond the bounds of hope, that, in ways and under conditions which we cannot yet see, the sections of Presbyterianism, to which successively they have been monuments of strife and bitterness, may sooner or later offer in them an undivided worship, and recall with equal gratitude their founder's name.

The other great event—greater immeasurably—in the centre of which Dr. Chalmers also stands, is the movement which passed through the stages of Non-Intrusion and Spiritual Independence, and ended in the division of the Scottish Establishment and the creation of the Free Church. I wish here to guard against partisan writing, all the more that my sympathies—sympathies drawn from vivid personal

recollection of these agitations—are with Chalmers. I will seek to be just to him without being unjust to others. It has often seemed, especially to the English mind, an extreme procedure to rend a Church, not to say an Establishment, in twain, upon the matter of the election of ministers, and still more upon the right of objecting without reasons given to their election, which was the principle of that Veto Law which Dr. Chalmers stood by. Still, it is certain that, if anything was sacred to Chalmers, this was. He saw in the competency of a peasant to decide on the suitableness of a proposed minister a case of the great Protestant principle of private judgment, a flash of the internal evidence of Christianity on the soul; and he defended even the inarticulate utterance of that judgment by an appeal to the deepest principles of mental philosophy. We may agree or dissent; but we are bound to own that this was in harmony with his life-long mission of preaching the Gospel to the poor, and calling forth its response in their breast. The other principle into which, when the civil courts rejected this Veto Law and punished adherence to it, the struggle resolved itself, and even more decisively than before, was the right of separate administration and discipline claimed by Dr. Chalmers for the Church under the name of Spiritual Independence. In some form or other, and at some point or other, all Christian Churches acknowledge the right of self-regulation under its Divine Head, which belongs to the Church of Christ as a peculiar and spiritual society. In this sense even Arnold, who looked on the State as another face of the Church, would have regarded it as the bounden duty of the State to be regulated by Christ's laws, and no others. But Chalmers went farther, and held this to be a part of Christ's law, that the Church had a separate province, and that State functionaries should not interfere with the office-bearers of the Church in all such acts as the definition of

creeds, the control of worship, the admission and exclusion of members and ministers, and all similar questions of government and discipline. This he founded on the New Testament idea of a kingdom not of this world; and while he granted and contended for an alliance of the Church with the State, it was always on the understanding that this spiritual territory should be kept inviolate, as he believed to be ordained in Scripture, and legally provided for in the Scottish National Church by its constitution and history. I am not contending here that he was in the right either as to Scripture or fact; for this would be to turn an exposition into a vehicle of party. I am not judging between his convictions and those of other parties, who variously thought, either that this mutual independence of the two powers was not recognised in Scripture, or that something of its ideal purity might be sacrificed for the blessings of State connection, or that it could not be secured in State connection at all. I only wish to show, in justice to him, that the question was no narrow, sectional, or local one; and that while, with such convictions as his, it stirred up the depths of Scottish ecclesiastical patriotism, it touched the very essence of Christianity as a practical system, and appealed to the most intimate sentiment of Christian loyalty. For this principle, as he held it, of the separate action of the Christian Church, under Christ as its Head, when the denial of it came first from legal tribunals and then from the British Parliament,—more even than for the other, of the consent of congregations in the settlement of ministers, as equally denied,—he was willing to renounce the whole advantages, which none ever prized more highly, of State recognition and support, and to brave the imputation of inconsistency and surrender of the dearest interests of his country, urged with all sincerity, by many, especially among the aristocracy, like the Marquis of Dalhousie and Lord Aberdeen, who had been his warmest

admirers. The qualities of soul could not but be great that endured so prolonged and fierce a struggle. Impartial minds, while doing justice to others, and that on both sides, must ever be struck with the moral grandeur of Chalmers in this trying period. He sees from the first the gravity of the situation. He is resigned to the worst, and therefore he can do the best to avert the crisis. As the plot thickens, his courage rises; "Be it known unto all men, that we shall not retract one single footstep; we shall give place by subjection, no, not for an hour; no, not by a hair-breadth." He steers right onward amid all the winds and currents of difficult, intricate, and stormy negotiation. "Nothing will serve," says he, "but an open, courageous, and rectilineal policy." His heart is fixed, trusting in God. "The prospects of the Church very dark. Bear me up, O God, under the weight of every visitation. Be Thyself my Portion." He makes common cause with his brethren. "Let me not, in this crisis of our Church's history, urge a sacrifice upon others which I would not share with them." "If there is a break-up, I mean to call my house 'The Refuge.'" He directs the perplexed to the highest Guide: "Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness." He is the first to abandon hope of a solution; and his buoyant and active spirit taking wing into the future has planned and developed, under the name of a Sustentation Fund, to be equally divided among the resigning ministers, a large supply for the new body before it is ushered into the world. These great qualities recall the heroic age of Christian history. They are not the property of one section of the Church, but of all. The Free Church, indeed, has no reason to be ashamed of her founder. But virtues and graces like these shed their light far and wide on the common path of sacrifice and self-denial, that opens sooner or later on every Church and every individual, and that all must tread who would keep the faith.

The Church of God is not so rich in such examples that it can undervalue them when they arise; and hence, when on the memorable day of the Scottish Disruption, the name of Chalmers was added to those of Luther, and Zuingle, and Howe, and Wesley, and others, who have paid the greatest earthly price for what in conscience they judged spiritual freedom, it was felt that religious conviction had received a universal impulse; and the homage of applause and tears and awe-struck silence attested the great saying of Butler, that "Had conscience strength as it has right, it would absolutely govern the world."

The later years of Chalmers I will not follow. His labours in organizing a Sustentation Fund for the Free Church ministry evoked a liberality without parallel, yielding in the first year nearly £70,000, with a continual tendency to increase.* He also gave development to the New College and other schemes of the denomination. He continued his experiments in territorial missions, till they were visibly successful. He rendered a service to Christian literature by assisting in the establishment and support of the *North British Review.* And he rendered a yet greater service to Christian union by taking part in originating the Evangelical Alliance, regarding as he did the differences among the majority of Christians, especially the Evangelical Dissenters in the country, as so many men of straw, and hoping (to use his own words) "to get the heads of the various denominations to meet together and consent to make a bonfire of them."

* The Sustentation Fund in 1864 amounted to about £116,000, yielding to nearly 800 ministers a dividend of £138, and to about 100 more from £80 to 157, besides about £40,000 added in the form of supplement by individual congregations. The communion-roll of the Free Church is between 250,000 and 300,000, and the people adhering to it are variously estimated from a fourth to a third of the population of Scotand. In twenty-one years it has raised about seven millions sterling.

The Scottish disruption occurred almost in the year of his grand climacteric, and four years more of what he loved to call his Sabbath decade ran on with an ever softening and mellowing effect, amidst public work, study, and devotion. A parting visit was paid, in the spring of 1847, to the scenes of his youth, of singular tenderness, and another to England, where he was examined for the last time by the House of Commons on the Free Church movement in connection with the granting of sites, and preached his last sermon amidst the surviving friends of Hall and Foster in Bristol. By the time he returned to Edinburgh, in the end of the week, the Assembly proceedings had begun; and after the Sabbath rest, a report on some public matter was expected from him on the Monday, when the startling tidings burst upon the meeting that he was dead. On the Sabbath evening, after retiring to his chamber, he had rested fromhis la bours, and next morning was found half erect in bed, in the attitude of majestic repose. A prayer, overheard some hours before in the garden,—"O Father, my heavenly Father,"—showed that, like Enoch, "he walked with God," and in answer to it "he was not, for God took him." A life of singularity and visible elevation above the common style of man, full of sudden shocks and critical periods, had reached a characteristic end.

I have striven not to exaggerate the place of Chalmers in Scottish religion. If I have said too much of his influence on its revival and development, it has been involuntary, and in obedience to that silent law whereby every great and good man diffuses the light in which his own features brighten as they shine. Little as my direct intercourse with him was, it has left an indelible impression; and this may have heightened my sense of the degree in which the whole Scottish atmosphere in which we live and work has been illuminated by his presence. Of the faces of the departed that rise out of

the past, there is none that I think of more tenderly, none on whose memory I feel it more sacred to dwell. Nor would I honour such men, grouped, as they now are, in lofty fellowship, only by remembrance, and, as Tacitus says, by imitation ; but also by the more Christian tribute of anticipation. They are the lights, not only of the past, but of the future. The heaven in which I believe is not the heaven of shadowy and secluded spirits, cut off from all sympathy with the earth which they have enlightened, and indifferent to the success or failure of the works on which their noble energies have been expended. In continuing their labours in anything of their spirit, we are fulfilling their joy and brightening their crown. In this sense of indestructible unity and predestined association, may we come daily to the sprits of the just ; and next to the hope of the highest welcome, may there breathe in our life-long struggle the humble but warm desire to gain also their sentence, at the end of the day, that we have not marred their work or dishonoured their memory, but, like them, have borne and had patience, and, for Christ's name's sake, have laboured and have not fainted !

The Character of Christ

AN ARGUMENT FOR THE HISTORICAL VERITY OF THE FOUR GOSPELS.

A LECTURE

DELIVERED BY

THE REV. CHARLES VINCE.

THE CHARACTER OF CHRIST, &c.

It cannot be denied, and it should not be concealed, that whoever believes the Bible to be the "Book of God," believes a great matter, for which the evidence ought to be most clear and conclusive. The Christian takes his sacred book, and exclaims: "This is God's message to me: I must enthrone it above my heart and conscience, and above my reason too." There should be solid and satisfactory ground for an assertion so bold and broad, and withal involving such issues. Holding forth his sacred book to his fellow-man, wherever he finds him, the Christian exclaims: "This is from our Father in heaven. He who formed us out of the dust of the ground, and breathed into us the breath of an immortal life, has sent this book that we may learn from it those truths concerning our duty and destiny, about which the earth and the heavens are so profoundly silent; and the most eager heart and the most inquisitive mind can elsewhere glean no satisfactory information. You must make this the man of your counsel, the lamp to your feet, and the light to your path." Those who carry the Bible round the world, and make this declaration, must never complain of the challenge it calls forth. They must expect the responsive

inquiry: "What are the credentials of this alleged Divine ambassador? Where is the proof that the fire which burneth on this altar was kindled by the very breath of God? How are we to be assured that the light which shineth from these pages is light from heaven, and cannot lead astray?"

The demand for evidence may not always be in the best spirit. Often it may be nothing but the querulous outcry of the captious and the cavilling. Sometimes it may be only the clamour of those who are anxious not to believe, because they want the shield of their infidelity for the shelter of their impurities. But even these are not always to be treated with silence; for their cases, also, are included in the comprehensive injunction: "Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason for the hope that is in you."

It might have been thought that John and his disciples had received proof enough, and to spare. Yet Jesus displayed no anger when they went with their half-doubting question: "Art thou He that should come, or do we look for another?" Instead of chiding them for their extravagant demands, or scourging them for their lingering unbelief, He at once set a fresh array of evidence before them. There was no need for stint, for the proof was most abundant and ready to hand. So, when he who had already received so much—when he who had seen the heavens open, and the Spirit of God descending like a dove—when he who had heard the voice of the Eternal testifying to the Sonship of Jesus, yearned for further confirmation, as if, in his sorrow and solitude, he must make assurance doubly sure, there was no upbraiding; but at once, out of the vast resources of ever-accumulating evidence, the loving heart and liberal hand of his Lord sent him another and a rich supply.

Happily, in this respect, the disciple can, to a great extent, act like his Master. If the unsatisfied mind of

unbelief cry out for proof, we need not deal it out sparingly. We can afford to be lavish to the last degree, for there is plenty of it. Lapse of time serves only to augment its power. Widening experience adds daily to its stores. It is difficult to say for which it is more remarkable—for its resistless strength, or its exhaustless variety. Having implanted in man's heart a love of diversity, God everywhere maketh provision for its gratification. His works are full of a rich variety. Even "one star differeth from another star in glory." His word displays the same characteristic, for it was "at sundry times and in divers manners" He spake in time past unto the fathers; and then, as if to make the diversity more complete and wondrous still, "last of all He sent His Son." In our Christian Evidences there is found the same rich variety. They are derived from miracle, and prophecy, and history. There are proofs from the Bible's revelation of the Divine character, from its moral precepts and purity, from its holy spirit and purpose, from its unfailing candour, and its severe impartiality, from its undesigned coincidences, and its adaptation to human woes and wants, from the state of the world where it has never been, and from the fruits it has produced wherever it has been fully planted in the hearts of men. The monuments of the dead past, and the experiences of the living present, alike furnish their testimony. The evidences are as diversified as human dispositions. They meet all kinds of mental and moral peculiarities. The confidence of each one can be sustained by befitting support, whatever may be the distinctive features of his position and character. The Christian's faith in the Divinity of the Bible rests on no single stone. It is like the jasper wall of the celestial city, which hath twelve foundations, although we may be sure any one of them would suffice to uphold the entire structure, and make it too strong for the gates of hell to prevail against it.

From the many foundations one is to be chosen for present examination. Out of the vast array of proofs, we take that which is supplied by the character of Christ—the matchless character which still abides, the greatest moral wonder in the world's history. Around it there gather the Christian's deepest adoration and strongest love—his most intense interest and devout thankfulness. To him the character of his Lord is well-nigh everything. It shows him what unfallen man was, and what all men would have been if sin had not frustrated the Divine purpose, and marred the handiwork of the Almighty. It shows him what all ought to be. As one says, "It is a new conscience in the world."

> "In His life the Law appears
> Drawn out in living characters."

It shows him what those will be who are found amongst His true and faithful followers. "If we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." Thus the character of Christ is a memory of what *was* in Eden,—it is a model of what *ought to be* in the wilderness—it is a prophecy of what *will be* in glory. A purpose still more divine it serves. It is the living image of the invisible God. It is the heart of God revealed. It is the great mystery of godliness—God manifest in the flesh. Whoever draweth nigh to see this great sight, should hear and hearken to the voice which saith, "Take thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground."

The one purpose to which we would now reverently apply the character of Christ is to prove from it that the four Gospels are not cunningly-devised fables, but that they are substantially and fully true; that the Evangelists did not draw upon their own or other people's fancies, but that they simply narrated what was actually said or done or suffered

by Him whose history they profess to write. Here are four distinct books pertaining to one and the same brief life. They tell of One who, if what they say be true, wrought many wondrous deeds, and uttered words quite as marvellous, and moreover breathed a spirit and maintained a character which for blamelessness and beauty, for praiseworthiness and perfection, surpassed in wonder all the deeds He ever did, and all the words He ever said. As to the simplicity and interest and power of the four narratives, there can be no question. It must be admitted that, be it true or false,—take it for all in all, another such story was never told. But then comes the all-important inquiry, "Is it fact or fiction?" Some have been bold enough to insinuate that it is a complete forgery, having no more foundation in reality than the baseless fabric of a dream. That kind of infidelity is comparatively harmless from its very extravagance. It can never be held by any but the baser sort. Far more perilous, because more plausible, though, as we deem it, equally fallacious, is the theory that the Gospel story is part fact and part fiction. It is granted that there was a centre of truth, but it is contended that around this hosts of fabulous statements were gathered by the teeming fancy of one and the perverted devotion of another, and the feverish fanaticism of a third. It is frankly admitted that there was a real Christ, but not altogether the Christ we see in the four Gospels. That Christ, they affirm, is to a large extent the creation of fervid imagination and exaggerated discipleship, of mistaken homage and gossipping tradition. This being the case, it is the herculean task of modern criticism to separate the true from the false—to strip the real Christ of all those gaudy robes wherewith in the four Gospels fancy, folly, and falsehood have invested Him, and set Him before us in all the simplicity and dignity of nature and of truth. If we can only yield ourselves to the teaching of these great

analysts, they will in time point out to us every adulteration the history contains. They have ingenious microscopic apparatus, or infallible chemical tests, whereby they can, with greatest minuteness and certainty, discern between the fact and the fiction. It is quite true that the application of these tests, and the use of this apparatus, are not always clear to common minds. Some of us are utterly at a loss to understand why this portion of the history is rejected, and that portion is retained. To us they appear so exactly alike that we think if the one be true the other cannot be false, or if the one be denounced the other cannot be deemed trustworthy. This perplexity, however, arises from our ignorance of the nature and application of the principles of historic criticism, and all we need is simple faith in the men who apply them. For you will find that those who talk loudest about Reason and the supremacy of her tribunal, soon begin to make demands on our confidence, if not on our credulity. They cannot do their mighty works for us unless they have our faith. Our confidence being given to those who apply the tests whose operation we cannot comprehend, the result will be sure. Instead of the strange admixture that bears the names of the four Evangelists, we shall have a substance from which every deceptive and deleterious ingredient is removed, and we shall be able to rejoice in the possession of what this poor deluded world never had before—the truth about Christ, and nothing but the truth.

In passing, it may be observed, that the difficulty one has in giving his confidence to these critics, is increased by the confusion that prevails in their own ranks. They are by no means agreed amongst themselves, as to the relative proportions of fact and fiction contained in the Gospels. Some carry their eliminating processes much farther than others. Some tenaciously retain what others rigorously expel. As one goes from one analyst to another, he finds

that the truth to be sacredly kept becomes a very variable quantity. With all the vaunted soundness of the principles on which they proceed, it is rare to find two of them drawing the boundary line between reality and myth in precisely the same place. Their perplexity and mutual contradictions strengthen one's conviction that there is but one alternative—all the history, or none of it; and we contend that, as we look at the character of Christ, our reason is with our faith, and bids us receive the history unbroken and entire.

The emphasis with which we would reject the coarse and clumsy assertion, that the Gospel histories are altogether a fabrication, is not greater than that with which we would reject the refined and scholastic theory, that part is fact and part is fiction. So far as all faith, and reverence, and trustfulness towards the Scriptures are concerned, the latter theory is quite as fatal as the former. Some who thrust all miracles out of the life of Christ, and some who go still further with their exclusions, do yet call themselves Christians, and profess to be full of reverence and love for Him whose name they bear. Charity may bid us believe in their sincerity, but common sense teaches us, that if they could get the world to believe as they believe, the power of Christianity would soon be diminished, almost to the vanishing point. How could the Bible maintain its kingly place and power amongst men, if it be once credited on a wide scale that the Gospel story—the very centre and crown of the book—is one-half or one-third a cunningly devised fable. When that becomes the creed of Christendom, Ichabod must be written, for the glory will have departed.

But it is no use to show that this theory is fatal to the supremacy of the Bible and the power of Christianity, unless we can also show that it is false as well as fatal; and fatal only because it is false. This is the endeavour of this

lecture. It is contended that the Gospels are simple, faithful histories. Verbal discrepancies there may be,—here and there a seeming contradiction, which, with our present light, we cannot reconcile; but still they are true in substance, as well as in spirit; and, speaking broadly and popularly, they are true in the very letter. In proof of this the character of Christ is to be cited, and the sum and substance of the argument to be illustrated is, that both the nature of that character, and the way in which it is revealed to us, confirm the universal Christian conviction that it was something which men saw and not imagined, and that the Evangelical historians, be they who they may, painted their matchless picture from actual life.

The first point on which stress is to be laid is the mere literary form in which our Lord's character is presented to us. There is no elaborate description, and, so far as the four Evangelists are concerned, scarcely any description at all. They never avow their intention of painting a rare and perfect character. There is no set and formal effort to do it, and yet in their artless and unimpassioned narrative the character comes out with such vividness that the dimmest eye can see its glories, and with such force that the coldest heart feels its power, and with such naturalness and life-likeness, that the most sceptical must acknowledge there is at least great semblance of reality and genuineness about it. Almost without number lives have been written and characters have been pourtrayed, but there is no other character which stands out so distinct and clear to the eye of the world, and whose distinctive features and manifold graces are so readily perceived. Even observant readers may sometimes peruse the biography of a man, and get no clear conception of what kind of man he was. But it is scarcely possible for the most thoughtless person to read the life of Christ, and fail to see at once the leading features of His

character. Yea; what child can read the story, and not learn from it at once what manner of man He was of whom the story is told? And this, although there is so little actual description. One Evangelist says, "He grew in wisdom and in favour with God and man." Another tells us that His adversaries said, "Never man spake like this man." A third quotes His own words: "I am meek and lowly in heart." Once or twice we are told of the compassion He had on the multitude. A few other passages of this kind there may be, but beyond them neither eulogy nor description. The Evangelists record incidents and leave them to reveal character. In other words, and to speak somewhat technically, instead of verbal portraiture we have a dramatic projection and representation. We must get our impression of what Jesus was from the simple narrative of His actions and words, and from that alone.

To illustrate this point it may be well to take some one virtue and show how the recorded incidents set it before us. Let us take the grace of prudence. What it is all can understand better than any can describe. It stands opposed to all hastiness and presumption. It is careful not to offend where offence may be lawfully avoided, and not to provoke opposition by any uncalled-for words or deeds. Prudence is a kind of ministering spirit that waits on the other virtues to keep them from that excess in which virtue becomes vice. It goeth with faith to keep it from being presumptuous, and with courage to keep it from sinking into foolhardiness and rashness. It waits on enthusiasm to check it from rising into the fever-heat of fanaticism, and it ministers to fidelity and firmness to prevent their degenerating into stubbornness and obstinacy. It goes with frankness to keep it from rudeness, and with conscientiousness to keep it from sinking into mere crotchetiness, and busying itself about straws. It waits, like a ministering angel, on zeal to keep

it from making strifes and schisms on those matters about which good men should agree to differ, and yet dwell together in peace. Prudence is a virtue with which the young are not too soon enamoured. Young men are often blind to her angelic beauties, and very sceptical about her heavenly origin. They think her to be rather a low, earth-born thing, wanting the wings, and the brightness, and the dignity of other graces from above. But grey hairs and growing years, bringing wider experience and riper judgment, bring also the conviction that Prudence too, despite her homely appearance, is one of the ministering ones sent of God to beautify and bless the earth.

The human character of our Lord would not have been perfect if it had been destitute of this sober but serviceable excellency. Speaking of Him, ancient prophecy said, "My servant shall deal prudently." The Evangelist John says, "But Jesus did not commit Himself unto them, because He knew all men." Beyond these two passages there is no description of His prudence; no assertion of it; no allusion to it, direct or indirect. Concerning this particular virtue, the Evangelists could scarcely have been more silent if Jesus had been utterly destitute of it, and yet their record of His doings and sayings brings the grace into bold relief, and we see that, whenever circumstances required it, He exercised it with an unfailing constancy.

Early in His public life there came His threefold temptation, and first the battery of the adversary was opened against His faith. He was asked to do what would have embodied distrust of His Father's love and providential care. That assault was an utter failure, so at once the tempter wheeled his dread artillery round to the other side of the Lord's character, hoping to find a weakness there. The attack was led on against His prudent carefulness. Promises were quoted. He was reminded that He lived a kind of charmed

life ; angels had Him in their safe keeping, so He might safely dare what others could not do, with impunity. Why not startle and subdue the wonder-loving, sign-seeking people, by hurling Himself from the pinnacle of the temple, and falling harmlessly on the marble pavement of the courts below ? The answer was prompt and the victory complete. Trustfulness must not lead on to rashness. "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Thus it was found that His character was as strong on the side of its carefulness as it was on the side of its confidence. In the great struggle with the prince of darkness the Saviour's faith achieved the first triumph, but His prudence was crowned with the glory of the second. There were frequent displays of the same spirit when His foes came with all manner of crafty questions, seeking to entangle Him. With such mischievous subtlety some of these inquiries were constructed, that He could not have escaped from the snare if He had not combined in Himself the wisdom of the serpent with the harmlessness of the dove.

It is the work of holy courage to face danger when conscience demands it, and it is the province of prudence to escape from peril, when the escape violates no principle and neglects no duty. The first journey that Jesus took through Samaria into Galilee was a journey partly of pity and partly of prudence. He went to preach the Gospel to the Samaritans, and then to resume His labours of love amongst the Galileans ; but he went, also, because His success in Jewry had reached the ears and aroused the persecuting spirit of the Pharisees. Four or five times (as we gather from St. John's history) he left Jerusalem and its neighbourhood, and went away into comparative obscurity, because the unsleeping anger of his foes made it unsafe for Him to remain in Judæa. Surely, if it were ever true of any one, it was true of Him : "God's servant shall be kept

immortal till His work is done;" and yet the courage with which He braved all necessary peril was not greater than the carefulness with which He avoided all that was unnecessary.

For the most part, mercy was the spirit that presided over all the manifestations of His power. But there are not wanting instances wherein His marvellous might was as much the servant of His prudence as of His compassion. They came demanding the temple-tribute. He pointed out His Sonship, and the claim it gave Him to be free from the levy. However, it is not always wise to enforce our rights. Especially must he who would do good to others be ready sometimes to forego lawful claims. Jesus sent Peter to fetch the fish that contained the coin. "Take that," said He, "and give unto them for me and thee." The reason assigned was, "Lest we should offend them." Not to heal any sufferer, not to assuage any anguish, not to prove His Messiahship was that miracle wrought, but to avoid unnecessary provocation, and to prevent a perplexity on the part of the people which would have been a hindrance to His success.

There are one or two touching instances in which our Lord was bold for Himself because He was strong, and He was prudent for the disciples because He knew they were weak. In the dead of the night the armed men went into Gethsemane to lay violent hands upon Him, and lead Him away to unjust trial and cruel death. As they drew near, He touched them with "the finger of His will," and they went backward and fell to the ground. It was the strangest exercise of His power the history records. His subsequent words fully explained its purpose. "If ye seek me," he said, "let these (the disciples) go their way." He had shown His strength to the soldiers that He might put Himself in a position to dictate terms to them. They had so tasted His power as to know that, if He were not willing to give Himself up, they could not take Him. They were glad to take

Him on His own terms, which were these,—"Bind me, and take me away to the fiery trial, for I can bear it; but let these escape, for the furnace would be too fierce for them." There was pity for them when they slept instead of praying for strength for the coming conflict; and now there was prudent care for them in their feebleness. They say, "He tempers the wind to the shorn lamb." So He does; and more than that, when the blast of the wilderness cannot for wise reasons be modified, He sends the lambs away into a sheltering secrecy. Before the darkness of that dread night had fully passed away, the necessity for His prudence, and the wisdom of His procedure, were proved in a sad way. There was one disciple who thought himself to be strong when the Master knew he was weak, and he would not avail himself of the escape his Lord had so thoughtfully provided for him. Proud of powers that then only existed in his own imagination, he would not deem "discretion the better part of his valour." He rushed into the danger, and in a few short minutes laid the foundation of a life-long shame and sorrow.

Illustrative proofs of our Lord's prudence, like those already adduced, might be multiplied, but enough have been quoted to confirm the point I am anxious to establish—that our ideas and impressions of Christ's character are not gained from any elaborate description or eulogy on the part of the Evangelists, but from their simple records of what was said and done. Not one of them depicts the Saviour's prudence—none of them assert it—only one of them refer to it, and that in a very indirect manner; but the story of His life, as they tell it, reveals the virtue with a completeness and consistency altogether unique. The same thing might be proved concerning all the other graces in His character. Descriptive allusions to them are very rare, and brief; but by the recorded deeds and words we are as well instructed about

them as if there had been volumes of most direct information, and most vivid and avowed portraiture.

"This being granted," some may exclaim, "what is its practical bearing?" We answer, "The form in which this character is revealed is no slight proof of its having been a living reality." If the character be altogether or largely fictitious, this dramatic method of representing it is by far the most difficult. It would be comparatively easy to assert that a certain man had this and the other excellency, and then to give full portraits of the alleged features of character: but to say nothing about the virtues—to set the man before us, and to make him develop himself by his own actions, "that is a labour—that is a work." It belongs to the highest efforts of human genius, and is a form of fiction in which some of the most gifted men have utterly failed. However much we may mourn over his sins, and the sorrows they brought upon him, we must concede that in the sweep and richness of his imagination this century has not seen a greater than Byron. His powers of description were almost peerless; but in the attempt to give a dramatic projection of different characters he never succeeded. As Lord Macaulay says, "He analysed them, but he did not make them show themselves. It is not thus the great masters of human nature have pourtrayed human beings. Homer never tells us that Nestor loved to relate long stories about his youth. Shakspeare never tells us that in the mind of Iago everything that is beautiful and endearing is associated with some filthy and debasing idea." What is said of Byron may be said of another, whose genius was associated with a purer spirit, and, therefore, with a happier life. Wordsworth's picture of the deaf peasant will last as long as the language, to testify to his descriptive powers, but in dramatic representation he sadly failed. Shakspeare stands the crowned king in literature, not

only for the vigour and accuracy of his conceptions of human character, but also for the form in which he has placed those conceptions before the world. His profound insight into our nature, and his power to express all its passions, are not the whole of his unequalled gifts. He might have perfectly described the anguish of a father's heart pierced with a child's ingratitude—the torture of a bosom burning with jealousy, and the strange moods of a noble mind at last incensed by villany on to madness; but his genius has done something much more difficult. He has brought Lear, and Othello, and Hamlet before us, and made them, in the course of their action and utterance, unveil all these things to us; and in the power to achieve that task so perfectly part of Shakspeare's peerlessness is found. From these facts it is clear that if the Gospel story be largely fictitious, it is a fiction that belongs to the highest reach of the human mind; for not only is it a revelation of the most wonderful character the world ever heard of—it is also a most perfect revelation of that character, by the most difficult of all methods. If it be a fable, it is indeed "cunningly devised," and the devisers were men whose powers entitle them to a place amongst the loftiest. We say nothing at present about the creation of the character. If some superior being from another world had given these Galilean fishermen and tax-gatherers the glorious ideal, it is hard to believe that they could have constructed such a complete and consistent and perfect fictitious embodiment of it. To imagine such a blameless and beautiful character as an abstraction was beyond their power, as will be fully insisted upon presently. We go further, and contend that, the conception of the abstract and perfect ideal being granted, it is altogether unlikely that they could have imagined all or half the incidents and sayings whereby the noble and matchless conception takes visible form, and apart from any description

reveals itself with a vividness and completeness altogether unequalled.

Boswell's "Life of Johnson" reveals the character of its subject very much in the way of which I have been speaking; and the revelation is most complete. We learn from it what was Johnson's forte, and what were his foibles. Lord Macaulay says, we know him better than any other man in history; and he repeatedly expresses his surprise that one so destitute of ability as Boswell should have produced the greatest biography in the world. Is not the secret of his success largely found in the fact that in his artless story he simply tells us what his hero said and did? The picture of the man is most full and vivid; but this is not because of the descriptive powers of the author, but simply because he constantly painted from life. Suppose that by subtle criticism it could be established that Dr. Johnson is altogether a myth, or that three-fourths of the so-called facts in the Life are creations of fancy. It is true they harmonise well—they have a great appearance of naturalness—and they combine together to give a most complete and consistent revelation of a very extraordinary character; but still their birthplace was in Boswell's or somebody else's imagination. Numberless little incidents and brief utterances there are in the book; they are told as having taken place or having been spoken in all manner of diversified scenes and circumstances; they are always consistent with each other; and they wondrously preserve the identity of the character they set forth. Glimpses of the man we get through each one, and it is always the same kind of man we see; but, despite all this, they are purely mythical. If such a theory could be maintained, it would follow as a matter of course, that the "Life of Johnson" is one of the greatest works of imaginative genius in the world. Boswell, instead of being reckoned the simpleton Macaulay

declares him to have been, must be accounted one of the most gifted men that ever lived. It would have required extraordinary powers to conceive the ideal of such a character as Johnson's; and then to embody the ideal not in a long description, but in a vast variety of deeds and sayings first created by the fancy, and afterwards set forth in the simplest and most natural manner. If it be to any large extent a fiction, it is, in many respects, the most remarkable in our own or in any other language. Admit the book to be true, and that Boswell depended for his success upon his simply and faithfully narrating what actually took place, and then his success is not overwhelmingly perplexing; but contend that the book is false, and that the author, for his success, depended upon his own creative powers, and then you must feel that it is a most marvellous, and, judging from what we know of the human mind, almost a miraculous instance of successful fiction. That which is very easy to do, when a man has to do it by telling a number of facts, may be unconquerably difficult, when it has to be done by drafts on the man's own fancy. Hence Boswell, narrating what actually took place, could give us a revelation of character which had it been a work of imagination, would have tasked to the uttermost the powers of a second Shakespeare. The application of this illustration need not be dwelt upon at any length. All that has been said about it may be said with tenfold force about the Gospel story. The success of the evangelists in setting Christ's character before us cannot be questioned, and the assertion may be repeated, that the more we consider the mere form in which that perfect picture of their Lord is given to mankind, the more we feel that there is only one reasonable way of accounting for their success—they created no fictions; they borrowed no traditions—they recorded facts, and facts alone.

In several writers on this subject there are allusions to

the character of Socrates, and to the fact that in the writings of Plato and Xenophon, Socrates is revealed to us in this same form. Contrasting Jewish with Greek culture, the Galilean peasants with Plato, and the character set forth in the writings of the former with that set forth in the writings of the latter, the same conclusion is inevitably reached, as to the full truthfulness of the evangelical history. "We certainly hold the entire dramatic projection and representation of Socrates, in the pages of Plato, to be one of the most wonderful efforts of the human mind. In studying him, it is impossible that his character, as a teacher of ethics, and his life-like mode of representation, should not suggest to us another character yet more wonderfully depicted—and by the same most difficult of all methods, that of dramatic evolution, by discourse and action—a sublime and original character, which is not only exhibited with the most wonderful dramatic skill, but in a style as unique as the character it embodies—a style of simple majesty, which, unlike that of Plato, is capable of being readily translated into every language under heaven. Now, if we feel that the portraiture of Socrates, in the pages of Plato, involved the very highest effort of the highest dramatic genius; and that the cause was no more than commensurate with the effect, it is a question which may well occupy the attention of a *philosopher*, how it came to pass that, in one of the obscurest periods of the history of an obscure people, in the dregs of their literature, and the lowest depths of superstitious dotage, so sublime a conception should have been so sublimely exhibited,—in a word, who could be the more than Plato (or rather the many, each more than Plato) who drew that radiant portrait, of which it may be truly said, 'that a far greater than Socrates is there?' "*

* Essays by Professor Rogers, Vol. I., pp. 366, 367.

Still lingering around the form in which this character is revealed to us, we may discern another feature in the history, testifying to its genuineness and authenticity—through a great variety of scenes and incidents, the *consistency of the character is maintained with the utmost completeness.* The rationalistic theory concerning the Gospels is, as we have seen, that many myths have been mingled with some facts. How the fictions were created—when, and by what hands the spurious threads were woven into the fabric amongst the few threads of genuine gold, Rationalism has not yet decided. Renan says that, for the historian, the life of Christ ends with His last breath on the cross; but how the story of the resurrection originated he is not certain. He asks, "Had His body been taken away, or did enthusiasm, always credulous, create afterwards the group of narratives by which it was sought to establish the faith in the resurrection?" He adds, as a matter on which there can be no doubt, "the strong imagination of Mary Magdalene played an important part in these circumstances;" and then, as if to confirm his assertion, he, in a foot-note, refers his readers to the fact that out of her had been cast seven devils. The direct bearing of that fact on the point I am not able to discern. Does M. Renan intend to imply that her having been possessed, is proof that her "imagination" was vigorous enough to "play the important part" which he so confidently assigns to it in the creation of the history of the Lord's alleged return from the dead; or does he intend to hint that her having had seven devils is proof that her heart was bad enough to prompt her to help largely in forging the resurrection-story, and palming it upon the Church and the world as a veritable fact? Having treated the history, on which millions have built their hopes of immortality, as a falsehood, he breaks forth into a strange rapture, in which he seems to love that which he believes to

be a lie, and to bless the lips that told it. He exclaims, in words which testify far more to the vigour of his fancy than to the soundness of his judgment, or to his reprobation of deception—"Divine power of love! Sacred moments, in which the passion of one possessed gave to the world a resuscitated God!" These extracts illustrate the way in which those who deny the historical verity of the Gospels seek to explain their origin. This much Rationalism appears to have decided—that various imaginations were at work, and different hands brought different parts of the fiction. Some of the great professors of "historic criticism" contend that the work of embellishment and addition was finished before the close of the first century; and others contend that it was not completed until two or three generations of Christ's disciples had passed away. According to these theories there were numerous legends made by one, and modified or enlarged by another,—they floated about on the wings of tradition until, in the course of a century or two they settled down, in company with a few facts, into the four distinct histories we now possess. If this be the true theory, then what a great marvel it is that all these diversified fictions, from different sources, fit in so well with the few facts; and what a much greater marvel it is that by the whole mass of fact and fiction, heaped together in this strange fashion, there is set forth a perfect character whose harmony and consistency are never violated.

Every one will see, that in a work of dramatic fiction the care must be great and constant, in order to maintain the identity of the characters through all the various scenes and incidents. This must be difficult, where the writer has no one to meddle with his work; and it must be almost impossible, where many different imaginations bring in their contributions to the story. In the Gospels we have four separate histories, made up (according to the theory of the

Rationalists) of floating fictions, blended with more or less of truth; and yet, each mingled mass of facts and fancies reveals a character without the shadow of a self-contradiction. More than that: not only does each of the four distinct groups of truths and fictions maintain with unfailing perfection the consistency of the character depicted; but the character as set forth by each history is in completest harmony with the character as set forth by the other three. Admit that each Gospel is a simple collection of facts and verities, and this agreement is not surprising; but if you contend that each one is a medley of simple facts, and of facts highly embellished by fancy, and of pure fictions gathered together from all quarters, you must admit that the beautiful and unbroken consistency of the character, maintained under such circumstances, is a marvel, almost amounting to a miracle.

Proof and illustration of this alleged consistency it would be easy to adduce, in rich abundance. A few may be given, as specimens of many more which each reader of the New Testament can gather for himself. The impression produced by the history is, that Jesus lived a life of strange self-forgetfulness and self-denial — that, according to His own words, He came, not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for others. That feature of His life and character is maintained throughout the manifold incidents of the four histories with most unfailing beauty and consistency. We gather from the story that He had powers with which He might have brought the homage of the world to His feet, and yet He lived in obscurity for thirty years of His brief life; He had powers with which He might have brought the wealth of the world into His lap, and yet He lived and died in poverty. He fasted forty days and nights, and suffered the pangs of an intense hunger. He was tempted to put forth

His great powers, and supply His necessities, in the wilderness. If He had done so, no one would have thought it a selfish act; but even from that He abstained. A few weeks later His public ministry began, and He wrought His first miracle; it was at a marriage feast, where He made wine for the guests. His first temptation was to turn stones into bread for Himself, and He would not do it; His first miracle was to turn water into wine for others. He who would not work a miracle to satisfy His own hunger, worked a miracle to supply other people's luxuries. Be it true or false, the history never contradicts itself concerning this supreme unselfishness of the Lord. It tells of His coming from heaven to earth and of His returning from earth to heaven. In reference to these journeys, it sets forth His love in a striking manner. It tells us how, when He came, He bade His heavenly choristers come with Him; and the night was filled with music. He set His face towards Bethlehem and Nazareth—Gethsemane and Golgotha—toward poverty and shame, and suffering and death—yet, attended with song, He came; and the fields of Bethlehem were lit up with such splendour, and the air rung with such melody, as mortal eyes had never beheld and mortal ears had never heard before. He died and rose again, and lovingly lingered about the earth for forty days, showing the same unselfish spirit. Almost with sadness, altogether with silence, He went away. Earth heard no sound of trumpet and no voice of song as He went from the scenes of His sorrow to the place of His glory. Music there was, we may be sure, but it was far away beyond the hearing of mortals. He kept up His strange love to the very last, and went back to His native heavens in such a manner as not to make the guilty world feel He was sorry He had come, and was glad to get away again. Surely, if men had forged the story, they would have had the silence when Christ came

into the world's shame and sorrow, and the songs when He returned to the peace and bliss of His Father's bosom. Or if, for the sake of showing His generous self-denial, they had imagined the incidents, and put the matter as it now stands, they would have been careful to point it out to us. They would not have done what the evangelists do—simply state the incidents, and leave us to discover the consistent love they reveal and their perfect harmony with all the other events in our Lord's life.

A cursory reading of the four Gospels would leave on our minds an impression that Jesus was full of forbearance and forgiveness. No matter how severely we scrutinize the narratives, we shall find no incident inconsistent with that impression. The men of Nazareth, with murderous malice, drove Him out of their city—He called down no fire upon them, but peacefully went into another city, and preached mercy to its inhabitants. In the precincts of the Temple the Jews took up stones to stone Him. He who gave energy to the withered hand, how easily He could have paralysed those arms outstretched with such malignant purpose! But He calmly looked the men in the face, and said: "Many good works have I showed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?" What facts these words suggested, and what a spirit they breathed — pitiful and patient even when its rebukes were severe! "I have healed your sick and cleansed your lepers; I have raised your dead and blessed your little ones; I have proclaimed my Father's mercy to all—for which of these things do ye stone me?" Not often does He speak of His own great and gracious deeds; and He does it now, not to win their deserved homage, but to restrain their shameful sinfulness. We come to the last miracle He wrought before His death—for whom—for what was it? To make provision for His doubly-widowed mother? To reward some faithful dis-

ciple? To recompense the Galilean women who had followed Him in the pilgrimage to that ever-memorable paschal feast, and ministered to Him of their substance? Nay! but to heal the wounded body of one of His adversaries. With more zeal than wisdom, Peter had smitten one of the men, who came into Gethsemane on the guiltiest errand that human hearts ever devised. Instead of sharing in the resentment of His disciple, Jesus rebuked it; instead of rejoicing in the anguish of His foe, Jesus removed it. His life was one long act of devotion. But what was His last prayer?—it was for the men who crucified Him.—"Father, forgive them!" To whom was His last promise made? To a guilty malefactor who at first had reviled Him. See how the history, through all its chequered scenes, reveals His forbearance and forgiveness, with the utmost consistency! What has been proved concerning these graces could be proved concerning all the others that adorned His character. Who can believe that there would be this unfailing and perfect identity of character, if the four histories were largely fabulous?

An objector may interpose, and say, "It is granted that the consistency of the character is never violated; but is that improbable in a work of fiction? Does not your own Paley admit 'that a dramatic writer is able to sustain propriety and distinction of character, through a great variety of supposed incidents and situations'?" The answer is, that in all fictions the characters are narrow. No character is introduced that it may display all possible features. Each is distinguished for one or two attributes; and, for the sake of unfolding these, it appears in the story. Any person extensively acquainted with the literature of fiction would be able, as fast as different fictitious characters were named, to mention the particular failing or excellency, or the distinctive peculiarities for which each one is con-

spicuous. In the realms of fiction, Shakespeare is by far the greatest delineator of human character that ever lived; and yet, in the sense in which I am now using the term, even his characters are more or less narrow. His point is not to make his dramas reveal a character in which all possible virtues, or vices, or peculiarities are found in constant and consistent action, but to reveal many different characters; one with one ruling passion, and another with another ruling passion—one with this distinctive excellency, and the other with that particular failing—this one with two or three prominent graces, and that one with two or three conspicuous blemishes. Under these circumstances, the maintenance of the identity and propriety of each particular character is not insurmountably difficult; and, of course, the narrower the character is, the more easy it is to keep up its consistency. But the case is far otherwise, when the character is of the greatest possible breadth, and the task to be achieved is not the consistent working of some one attribute, but the harmonious and consistent development of all the attributes—each one in action, but not one of them unduly prominent or powerful. This is what we have in the Gospels. As will be shown more fully presently, the character of Christ is as remarkable for its breadth as for its beauty. It contains all the elements of perfection, and to maintain the propriety and identity of such a manifold character, through a variety of incidents, is a work which fiction has never accomplished.

Suppose we set ourselves this task. We will imagine a certain kind of character—we will perfect our conception, but we will not describe it. We will create a host of events and utterances, in and through which our fictitious character shall be revealed. He shall be inflexibly upright, and all we have to do is to make a lot of stories in which his integrity shall be manifested, and be shown to be above

suspicion. This we may accomplish without much difficulty. But we will add another excellency. Our fictitious man shall be one of sweetest kindness and most unfailing generosity. Now our work begins to be arduous. We have to create incidents that shall reveal both his justice and his generosity, and that shall not suffer either of the excellences to violate the other. To give greater breadth to our imaginary character, there shall be added a purity before which all sin is abashed, and a pity from which the guiltiest may hope to obtain mercy. He shall be a man of most unfaltering courage—fearing the worst death less than he fears the least violation of duty ; and withal, he shall be of such carefulness as never to rush into unnecessary danger, or fall into avoidable difficulties. Our work is to forge and fashion numerous events, in which all these diversified virtues shall be in full operation without any self-contradiction or mutual clashing. Where, in the vast and ever-increasing literature of fiction, can you find such a work accomplished ? Let other features be added. Our fictitious man shall be invested with great dignity and majesty, and yet he shall be so full of condescension that lowliest people and little children will feel at home in his presence in a moment. He shall have a power that nothing can resist, and a gentleness that will never "break a bruised reed or quench the smoking flax." There shall be, moreover, a wisdom that none can ever bewilder, and a simplicity and plainness that none can ever mistake. Here are twelve distinct features of character, and there must be imaginary incidents in which they are disclosed, in full power and propriety, and without any conflict with each other. Who does not see that, with the introduction of each new feature, the difficulty of maintaining identity and consistency increases in a geometrical ratio ? The machinery of the story becomes more and more complicated, and more and more in

danger of tearing itself to pieces. But this is not half the truth concerning the character depicted in the Gospels. It embodies all the excellences the human mind has ever thought or heard of; and yet, as developed in the simple evangelical story, its harmony and consistency are never impaired. The assertion may be repeated, that fiction has never done anything like this. Identity and propriety she has maintained, but it has always been at the expense of breadth. In her highest efforts, consistency of character is always associated with comparative narrowness of character.

Will any one urge, in reply, that the people who made the Gospel stories, and the men who compiled them, had no design of unfolding a wonderful character, and therefore it is beside the mark to say, that human genius could not accomplish such a design? Even so! The fact that they had no settled plan, and no lofty ideal, makes their success all the more remarkable, and is no little proof that they did nothing but record what really took place. It would be hard to believe that, with design and deliberate effort, a number of savages could make a watch—it would be impossible to believe (unless we believe in miracles) that, without any design or concert, one made a pin, and another a wheel, and a third a spring, and a fourth a chain, and so on; and that at the end of a hundred years, or thereabouts, the different fragments were gathered together, and the result was a complete and perfect watch, and the only one in the world that would with unvarying regularity keep the time of the universe.

The point on which I have hitherto insisted is not the strongest, and I have dwelt upon it at such length only because it is less frequently noticed. When we pass from the form in which this character is revealed and look more closely at the character in all its graces and glories, we get still more conclusive proof that it must have been a living

reality. If the genius of those in whose midst and by whose hands the evangelical records were compiled is to be deemed inadequate to the task, of so perfectly presenting such a character in such a difficult method, how much more confidently may we declare their genius utterly incompetent to the work of creating the character itself? This brings me to ground over which numerous writers have travelled, and it would be foolish in me to think of keeping out of their track, or of pointing out many things to which they have not called attention. There need be no hankering after something new, for facts and arguments do not lose their power because they are old. They may be like the sun, well nigh as old as creation, and yet as vigorous and powerful as ever to sustain life and make the summer.

The character of Christ is more than faultless. Not only has it no flaw, but it is also full of all active perfections. Some characters are painfully imperfect because of what they *are*, and some because of what they *are not;* but in the character of Christ there is found neither blemish nor deficiency. It is not marred by the presence of one fault, or by the absence of one excellency. No conscience hath yet suggested the addition of virtues required to make it more complete. These facts forbid the thought that it is a piece of fancy work. Those who know most of fiction know best that it is always feeble, and it uniformly fails when it attempts to fashion faultless characters. The most vigorous writers we have, achieve no success in this direction. Their standard of perfection is not high, and yet they cannot succeed. For the most part, their perfect characters are tame and tasteless to the last degree. It is the blamelessness of inactivity and lifelessness. This has almost become a proverb, and the most wearisome of all things in works of fiction are those "faultless monsters whom the world ne'er saw." Embodiments of single virtues they may be able to

set before us with vigour and lifelikeness; but a broad and well-balanced character, free from failings and adorned with all the graces, the greatest masters of fiction have never exhibited. But the character of Christ is perfect, according to the highest standard the human mind has ever known. Wherever you take it, as it is embodied in the Gospels, you will find it far above the current morality, and far above all the conceptions which the most vigorous minds have formed of holy beauty and symmetry. When it was first set before men, the highest conscience was a long way beneath it; and during the two thousand years it has been in the world no human practice has ever overtaken it, and no human ideal has ever gone beyond it. Lifted by it, man's conceptions of moral perfection have been greatly raised, but they have never risen a step above it. Wondrously it has enlarged human ideas of the beauty of holiness; but not even with its help have any minds been able to imagine anything more complete and beautiful. As Dr. Channing says—"The character of Christ has withstood the most deadly and irresistible foe of error and unfounded claims—I mean Time. It has lost nothing of its elevation by the improvements of ages. Since He appeared society has gone forward—men's views have become enlarged, and philosophy has risen to conceptions of far purer virtues than were the boast of antiquity. But however the human mind has advanced, it must still look up if it would see Jesus. He is still above it. Nothing purer, nothing nobler has yet dawned on human thoughts. Then Christianity is true. The delineation of Jesus in the Gospels, so warm with life and so unrivalled in loveliness and grandeur, required the existence of an original. The character of Christ was real, and if so Jesus must have been what He professed to be, the Son of God, and the Revealer of His mercy to mankind."

The character of Christ is alone in the perfect proportion maintained between its different graces. As there is nothing lacking, so there is nothing in excess. Human nature has a strong tendency to take some one virtue and exaggerate it both in theory and practice. In our present imperfect state, it seems scarcely possible to get force without narrowness. Becoming convinced of the importance of some virtue, a man is too prone to say, "This one thing I do." We have heard men speak almost as if intemperance were the one vice of the race, and sobriety the one virtue of a regenerated world. Others talk as if all blessings were summed up in the one word "Peace," and all duty comprehended in the one word "Charity." There are parts of the country where they are famous for growing some one form of vegetable life. All skill and energy are devoted to that. There are acre after acre, and field after field, covered with the same particular growth. Great perfection is attained in that one thing, and the prizes for it are certain to be won, but the fertility of the scene is no atonement for its weary, dreary monotony. After that, how refreshing it is to get into a garden where there is a blessed variety—pansy and daisy, blushing rose and lily of the valley, ripening apple and purpling grape clusters. Nothing here may be grown in such perfection, but the littleness, with the diversity, is far more bearable than the monotony with the magnitude. So in moral husbandry, some concentrate too much care on one grace to the neglect of others. If there were a prize show of virtues, they for their favourite would be sure to get the premium. Still for one I must say that these are not the most pleasant men we meet with. I prefer a garden in which diversity as well as fertility is aimed at, and the owner tries to grow all the graces prescribed in the Sermon on the Mount. Only thus can human character become like the Paradise in which the Lord God walked in the cool of the day, and of which

we read—"Out of the ground He made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food."

It is in this complete variety and proper balance of the virtues that all men have more or less failed. Truth forbids our making exception in favour of the greatest or the best. Luther's boldness was sometimes so heavy, that the scale which held his prudence kicked the beam. The caution of Erasmus wanted to be balanced by courage, and the gentleness of Melancthon by firmness. It has been asserted that Doddridge's excess of charity helped to bring about the period when the Puritan churches lost their hold of the form of sound words. If we turn to inspired history, we find the same thing. One apostle was frequently in trouble because his zeal was not in association with discretion. The tender-heartedness of the weeping prophet wanted to be balanced by the iron determination that will not quail before difficulties; hence he had this rebuke: "If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with the horses?" Moses at first was too rash; and then, after the discipline of Midian, he was too timid. Coming away from Pharaoh's court, he ran to the work of delivering Israel without being sent; and forty years afterwards, he made all manner of excuses when God Himself commissioned him to undertake the arduous but glorious task. Probably not many will question the statement, that of all men Paul came nearest to the character of his Lord. Between even him and Christ there was a great gulf, the breadth and depth of which none knew better than the apostle himself. Daily he strove to have it diminished; and, gazing across it, his constant cry was, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect." Still it is true that he was nearer than any other of whom we have heard; but he sometimes failed as to this proper proportion and balance of the virtues. Firm as a

rock he was, and brave as a lion. Like a shore of flint, he could face the storm of adversity or persecution, and say: "None of these things move me." But this made him somewhat too intolerant of those who had less of courage and decision than himself. Did he not fail at least once in the spirit "that will not break the bruised reed, or quench the smoking flax"? John Mark would be a missionary, but something daunted his young heart, and drove him home again. If Barnabas, "the son of consolation," was too charitable toward the delinquent, was not Paul too severe when he refused to give him a second trial? Did he not forget to do what he afterwards enjoined on others: "If one be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore him in the spirit of meekness"? If all had been as severe with the backslider as he was, could there have been in future years that sentence in one of his own letters: "Take Mark, and bring him with thee, for he is profitable to me for the ministry"? You need not be wearied with additional illustrations. History is full of facts which prove that all the virtues in proper proportion have never met in any character but that of Christ.

Who so perfect in obedience as He? He kept the law to its least letter; He fulfilled all righteousness. Yet how considerate He was! and with what sweet charity He made excuse for His failing disciples: "The spirit, indeed, is willing, but the flesh is weak!" He never sacrificed His dignity, and He never violated His humility. It was He who in tenderness wept at the grave, and who in His gentleness took the little ones in His arms and blessed them. It was He who, with such majestic firmness, went out to meet His crucifiers, and to say: "I am He whom ye seek." They brought torches and swords. But no light was needed; He would not hide Himself. No force was required; He could face His death when once the hour had

come. It was He who, with such wise caution, went out of Jewry five times to escape the malice of the rulers. It was He who came back to the scene of danger with such unfaltering courage, when duty called Him to the Passover feast, or to the bereaved home in Bethany. Knowing that He had come away for safety's sake, the disciples were amazed when He proposed going back because Lazarus was dead. "Master, the Jews of late sought to stone Thee; and goest Thou thither again?" As if He would let prudence prevail over courage, when in the place of peril there was work for love to do—tears to wipe from weeping eyes, and broken hearts to bind up. The raising of Lazarus excited a fiercer hostility on the part of His foes. The same shower that develops beauty in the violet, only feeds and strengthens the poison of the deadly nightshade. The same summer morning that sends the lark singing to heaven's gate, dawns on the viper only to arouse it from its torpor, and give it back its old vigour to sting. The mightiest miracle our Lord ever wrought, instead of subduing the Pharisees, exasperated them into intenser hatred; and He had to exercise His carefulness again, and go into a wilderness place. The time of the Passover drew nigh. The earlier bands of pilgrims had reached the Holy City. "What think ye?" said they one to another; "will He come to the feast?" The answer was soon found. Carefulness had sent Him away when duty permitted it; and now courage brought Him back again, because duty demanded it. So perfect was the balance between the virtues, that not one of them was ever weakened through the excess of another. What equal place and power were given in His life to devotion and diligence! His professed followers have found it hard to combine the two. Some have thought that, to maintain devoutness, they must leave the world; and others have thought that being much in the world was

sufficient excuse for neglecting lonely thought and secret prayer. But who so devout as He? and who more freely mingled amongst the people in all manner of scenes and circumstances? He was at the marriage feast; "He accepted the ostentatious hospitality of the Pharisee; He turned not away from the house of the publican when He would spread the feast of gratitude. His ministry began and ended with a social act. At the marriage feast in Cana He wrought His first miracle. At the Paschal feast in Jerusalem He made His last request. And yet He was alone days and nights on the mountain side, and alone for weeks in the recesses of the wilderness." With His morning supplications, He frequently anticipated the dawning. His vespers and His vigils were often prolonged past the noon of night—

> "Cold mountains and the midnight air
> Witnessed the fervour of his prayer."

He brought life and immortality to light. He sought to centre human desires on the unseen and eternal. It was He who taught that the soul is man's chief care, and its salvation a blessing against which the whole world cannot be weighed; and yet, while teaching that spiritual interests are supreme, He was full of sympathy with every form of bodily suffering; and, if He had been a complete materialist, believing the body to be everything, He could not have displayed greater zeal in assuaging its anguish and healing its diseases. Thus it was that "graces which appear to be incompatible in ordinary mortals, blended in Him in sweetest harmony." No matter what particular virtue we desire to copy, we can look to Him and mend our blundering handwriting, and do our next page with fewer blots and blemishes. From Him the powerful and prosperous can learn meekness and thankfulness. From Him the poor can

learn a cheerful contentment; for though ofttimes He had not where to lay His head, He spoke of His poverty only once, and then not to complain of it for Himself, but only to restrain a too impetuous disciple, who was foolishly beginning to build the tower without counting the cost. From Him the rich can learn a lavish generosity, for He gave Himself away. From Him the straitened can learn a careful economy; for after He had fed thousands out of His exhaustless bounty, He bade them gather up the fragments that nothing might be lost. From Him men learn the purity that hates every sin, and the pity that yearns over every sinner. He is as the sun in the moral firmament. Around Him, like circling planets, all the graces move; and from Him each separate virtue gets the light that makes its day, the heat which makes its fertility, and the brightness which bringeth all its beauties into sight.

Time forbids that I should dwell at length on the fact that the character could not have been created by Jewish imaginations, because, in all its most distinctive features, it is unlike the peculiarities both of the age and the people. The men who wrote the Gospels sometimes show themselves in the history, and the glimpses we get of them are quite sufficient to convince us that, in painting the perfect character, they did not copy from themselves. It is very clear that if they had given us their own ideal of perfection, it would have been very different from that of their Lord. In what striking contrast His breadth, and benevolence, and spirituality stand to their narrowness, and selfishness, and low carnal longings for a mere temporal kingdom! Not only was the Jewish character essentially narrow, but many Jews retained the national peculiarity long after they became Christians. "Go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature," was the last command of Jesus. It was hard work to persuade many of the primitive disciples that "all

the world" meant more than Judæa, and "every creature" included more than Jews and circumcised proselytes. Cornelius must have been one of the best men in the world outside of the Christian Church, and yet Peter was exposed to peril through having gone and preached the Gospel to him. If the apostle could not have pleaded the sanction of a heavenly vision for his boldness in going to a Gentile, he would have been severely censured by the first Christians, even if they had not tried to take the keys from him. That question of carrying the Gospel to the Gentiles threatened once and again to tear the Church of Christ in twain, and the foremost apostle himself would not have dreamt of doing it but for the supernatural teaching he received, and which was three times repeated. How could these men and women, whose narrowness seemed almost incurable, fabricate a character which, for the breadth of its spirit, and the wide sweep of its sympathies, and the universality of its benignant purposes and endeavours, is such that "it renders all competition hopeless, and all rivalry ridiculous?" The love that would see a neighbour in every sufferer, that would have the Gospel preached in every language, and the fountains of Divine mercy opened to all thirsty human spirits, from one end of the world to the other,—that was a love which, to the Jews of those days, looked more like a weakness and a sin than a distinguished part of a perfect character. We see Christ weeping over Jerusalem, but we also see Him preaching the Gospel to Samaritans, praising the faith of a Roman soldier, healing the daughter of a Canaanitish woman, and bidding His followers remember that "the field is the world." This breadth is to us a crowning beauty in His character. It was to His early disciples the one thing that perplexed them. It was, to those amongst whom He lived, one of the chief reasons for hating Him and hunting Him to death. Therefore, "to suppose that this character was invented by unprincipled

men, amidst Jewish and heathen darkness, argues an excess of credulity and a strange ignorance of the powers and principles of human nature."*

We are not left to conjecture as to what kind of work fancy and tradition would have produced. They tried their hand, and the Apocryphal Gospels are the result. Some years since, great pains were taken to get them into circulation in England. If that were the endeavour of infidels, and they sought thereby to throw discredit on the four Gospels, received by us as genuine, their zeal was "like vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself, and falls on t'other side." Those who have any doubt concerning the authority of the New Testament narratives could scarcely do better than read the apocryphal stories relating to our Lord. The difference between the two sets of books is the difference between a divine reality and a very poor human imitation. Francis Newman, in his "Phases of Faith," tells us that his reading in the Apostolic Fathers, as they are called, greatly exalted his sense of the unapproachable greatness of the New Testament. The moral chasm between it and the very earliest Christian writers, seemed to him so vast as only to be accounted for by the doctrine that the New Testament was dictated by the immediate action of the Holy Spirit. Others less conspicuous than he, but almost as much disposed to doubt and question everything, have felt the force of the same fact; good and great men amongst the primitive Christians sat down to write with the Epistles before them, and yet the difference between their own productions and those they used as models is most visible and striking. What Mr. Newman says about the gulf between the apostolic letters, and the best writings of the early fathers, may be said with even increased force as to the gulf between the four Gospels, and all attempted imitations or supplements.

* Channing.

The difference is as great as that between a living man in the prime of his strength and beauty, and a wax model made by the clumsiest hands. Can we believe that human imaginations were equal to the work of creating the story, when we find that all their attempts to imitate it have been utter failures?

The sum of the argument (illustrated, it is to be feared, at too great length,) is—Here is a perfect character, "which is not the result of patient revision and successive improvements, but which, in its perfection, rose upon the world in full-orbed majesty, and its glory has never been surpassed or increased unto this hour"—here is a character perfect in all known human and god-like virtues—perfect in all those opposite graces whose harmonious co-operation is so difficult to maintain, and which, in no other character, fictitious or real, have been found in harmonious co-operation—here is a character conspicuous for excellences and beauties that were looked upon rather as weaknesses and blemishes by the age in which the character was maintained, and, moreover, by the very men in whose narratives the character is revealed—here is a character perfect beyond all previous conception and all subsequent experience; and yet its perfection is not described to us, but is dramatically revealed in one of the most simple, unadorned, and unimpassioned stories in the world, and revealed with a consistency that is never violated, and a completeness that has never been equalled. What can we think of this matchless matter? How did it originate? Can it be a cunningly devised fable? Has the genius of mankind ever shown the power that would warrant us in counting it capable of such a fabrication? Reason is with faith, when we say "Not a fable—not half a fable—but from first to last a great divine reality!" First to imagine it, and then to set it forth in simple story, would be as much beyond the reach of man's proved power as to

raise the dead, or to create a new star wherewith to gem the dark brow of night.

Amidst a multitude of assaults on our faith from quarters expected and unexpected, we may in patience possess our souls. Our citadel is not the five books of Moses, but the four Gospels—our corner-stone is not the author of the Pentateuch, but Christ. The truth of the evangelical history carries with it every other necessary thing. If it be fully established that there was such a Being as the Gospel narrative sets forth, we need not be afraid of losing anything that is vital or important. There are many threatenings as to what criticism and scientific discoveries will do with Old Testament history and the Mosaic account of the creation, and the supposed time of man's advent on the earth. Without alarm we may wait and see. Threatened disproof of the Bible and destruction of Christianity are no new things. Unbelief, according to its own account, has often been on the eve of very great achievements. It has been admitted that former assaults have not been so successful as was predicted—the "superstition" has still survived; but, with all confidence, it has been declared that the new discovery, the next weapon, would accomplish the task. However much the infidel repudiates "faith" he has no aversion to "hope." Of the unbeliever, in his attacks on the Bible, it is pre-eminently true that—

"Hope springs immortal in the human breast."

The millennium of scepticism has always been about to dawn. The benighted world has been assured and re-assured that the power to bring it to pass had at last come, and that to-morrow the "old Jewish stars" would be swept from the firmament, and the great sun of Reason have all the sky to itself; and then there would be such daylight and summer-time as the earth had never enjoyed

before. The promised paradise has not yet appeared; neither has the threatened chaos, out of which, by the plastic hand of infidelity, the paradise is to be brought. Past failures on the part of the sceptic forbid present fears on the part of the Christian. Of this we may be assured: neither science nor criticism can destroy the Christ of the Gospels; and, looking to Him, we may exclaim:

> "Without Thee we are poor, give what they will;
> And with Thee rich take what they will away."

One cannot tell what conflicts his faith may have to pass through. With growing years, the perplexity of the darkness, and the pressure of the mystery of this mortal state increase rather than diminish. Things which in former times one foolishly thought he could explain, he is now certain he does not comprehend. About how many of our conjectures and expectations each of us must say,

> "So runs my dream, but what am I?
> An infant crying in the night;
> An infant crying for the light,
> And with no language but a cry."

Boasting is not becoming. "Not knowing the things that shall befall me" must be our confession as we look on to the future. Still, in this one thing I will be confident: I shall never have to stand by an empty Gospel, as Mary stood by the empty sepulchre, and cry as she did, with breaking heart: "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him."

To Christian young men, the character of their Lord should be something mightier and holier even than a bulwark of their faith. We have to use it, not merely as an argument with which to refute other people's heresies, but as a light with which to guide our own life, and a model after which to build up our own characters. The manna

that was not eaten soon became corrupt. It lay glistening in the light of the morning, fit for angels' food; but if a man took it home only to look at it, or to talk about it, or to write letters to the Egyptians to prove to them that they had nothing like it, by the next morning it bred worms and stank. It was sent to men that they might turn it into blood, and bone, and muscle, and sinew, and so become strong for the hardships of wilderness life, and the perils of a pilgrim. He that would not use it for the nourishment of his strength soon found that it helped to poison the atmosphere, and to slay the very life it was intended to sustain. An indolent, unpractical orthodoxy breeds corruption and brings a curse. The truth about our Lord is our bread of life, whereby our piety is to get health and vigour, and grow "unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." The word of truth is the sword of the Spirit, and that is not put into our hands chiefly that we may pierce other people's follies, but that we may slay our own. Our highest use of the character of Jesus is to set it always before us, and to gaze upon its beauty till we "are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord."

The author of "The Eclipse of Faith" has rendered invaluable service to the cause of truth; and not the least valuable passage from his powerful pen is that in which he tells so touchingly of the influence the thought of Christ had in checking the bitterness and cooling the anger of controversy when he was subject to great provocation. "If I have written anything which seems unworthy of the cause of Him whose claims I seek, however feebly, to advocate, then all I ask of you is: BE JUST; lay the blame on *me*, but be *just* to *Him* who cannot be answerable for the offences of His disciples, since, if they obeyed His precepts, they never could thus offend. And at all events believe this: that if

the thought of Him has not done all it ought, it has done something. I have suppressed many, as I think, most deserved sarcasms which sprang into my mind in the ardour of composition, and have struck out many more which had flowed from my pen; and I have done both mainly from the recollection of HIM."*

This is what the Church needs, and the world too—men living in the felt presence of the Perfect Character, and striving to be like Him. We talk of paradise regained; there is not much to hinder it but man's want of resemblance to Christ. With all the blight and shadow brought by sin, the material elements of Eden are here still. To make earth a paradise would not require grander mountains or greener valleys. Would it require flowers of a richer hue, or birds of a sweeter song? The strain of the lark would suffice for a matin-song even in paradise, and the lays of the nightingale would not be discordant with the holiest vespers of regenerated mankind. We need not ask for a spring-tide of greater beauty, or a summer of augmented fruitfulness; for a brighter sun by day or a midnight sky with more of silent majesty. There is little on the earth that needs much amending except ourselves. A world-wide Christ-likeness is the one great necessity. If, in imitation of Him, there were truth on every tongue and kindness in every heart—gentleness in every spirit and obedience to God in every will—purity in every life and blamelessness in every character, the bloom and blessing of Eden would be seen again to-morrow. Be it ours to do what we can to bring back the lost glory! Our life may be too brief and our resources too narrow for us to do much; but some graces we may cultivate, which, though they do not restore paradise, will relieve the desolateness of the wilderness. In whatever hidden character they may grow,

* "Defence of Eclipse of Faith," p. 204.

their sweetness will not be wasted, for it shall rise up acceptable as morning and evening incense to Him to whom they owe their life and beauty, and in whose esteem the lowliest virtue is far beyond all the pomp of kings and all the pageantry of states.

As likeness to Christ is our great duty on the earth, so it will be our great glory in heaven. His saved ones shall be like Him, for they shall see Him as he is. Like Him in body—as He was after the resurrection, when He knew no weariness and felt no pain; and when, by His own inherent power, he could rise sublimely to the skies, and needed not, like Elijah, some chariot of fire wherein to ride thither. Like Him in spirit; all the graces which made Him the brightness of the Father's glory shall shine in their souls also. It is enough. Than the living image of Him heaven cannot bestow a richer boon, our hearts cannot desire a greater blessing. "I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness."

From Doubt to Faith.

A LECTURE

BY

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FROM DOUBT TO FAITH.

There are many thoughtful persons, having little leisure for learned studies, who are beginning to suppose that the foundations on which the faith of all Christendom has rested for eighteen hundred years, have at last been found rotten and untrustworthy. There is an impression that the great scholars of Germany, and their representatives and disciples in France and England, have, by a profounder and more fearless investigation of the claims of the Holy Scriptures than has been known in any previous age, discovered objections to the historical fidelity of the four Gospels so numerous and so formidable, that it has become the duty of honest men to re-examine the ultimate grounds of their belief in the Christian revelation. It is supposed, too, that the weapons by which our fathers won their controversial battles are pointless and powerless when directed against the more recent theories of unbelief; that the writings of all the great apologists are mere lumber on our shelves, as unfit to meet the massive and penetrating artillery of modern criticism as a fleet of the old-fashioned tubs which Nelson commanded at Trafalgar, to fight a score of iron-plated War-

riors with Armstrongs and Whitworths frowning from every port-hole; that the arguments of Lardner and Paley ought to be laid up in a theological museum, as specimens of the clumsy and obsolete arms of a former generation.

The confidence with which assertions of this kind are often made, and the extensive learning which is possessed by some of the leaders of the school of destructive criticism—learning, however, which is often altogether divorced from sound judgment—have startled and alarmed many good men.

Moreover, there are specious objections to certain historical parts of the Bible, floating up and down in our popular literature,—objections which are often canvassed in drawing-rooms and in workshops, and discussed in debating societies, which cannot be answered in a moment, even by persons who have pursued theological studies with all their intellectual strength, and with an earnest desire to know the truth. There are also difficulties, both in the Old Testament and in the New, which, through the loss—the irreparable loss, perhaps,—of knowledge possessed by the writers, have never yet been satisfactorily explained. And, even after particular objections have been met and cancelled, there are many persons who have a sense of uneasiness, from which they cannot escape, because they have no satisfactory knowledge of the strength of the positive proofs which sustain the great facts of the Christian religion.

It is my purpose, not to meet in detail the assaults of modern scepticism, but to show you some of the grounds of our belief.

I shall suppose that I am addressing persons who are in real trouble about the truth of the Christian Scriptures—who are in doubt, not about particular doctrines, or the authority of particular books, but about the fundamental facts on which the whole Christian system rests—who feel

the force of the difficulties which are urged in our own times by the most influential of the men who are attempting to reconstruct from its foundations the religious faith of Christendom.

You may come to me and say: "Here, in the New Testament, I find a wonderful story of miracles said to have been wrought in Judæa by Jesus of Nazareth more than eighteen hundred years ago. I am told that He claimed the most exalted personal dignity and supreme authority over the religious thought and action of mankind; that He chose certain men—fishermen and peasants for the most part—to be His representatives and apostles; that these men, like their Master, healed the sick and raised the dead, in support of their extraordinary pretensions; and that they introduced into the world a new system of religious doctrine, enforced the duties of common morality with new and very peculiar motives, and uttered calm but awful denunciations against all men who, having heard their message, should refuse to receive it. How can I tell that these miracles were wrought, and that these doctrines were really promulgated by the men to whom they are attributed; that the men themselves really existed? Eighteen centuries stretch between me and the times to which this marvellous history is said to belong:—some of these centuries were periods of violence, of superstition, of imposture;—how can I tell but that these strange stories have gradually and silently risen up, in countries remote from that where Jesus is said to have lived and died, and long after all who knew anything about Him had passed away? If *now* and *here*, there were men who could stop the funeral procession, and restore life and motion to the dead—men who could give sight to the blind, make the deaf hear and the lame walk; and if these men taught a pure and lofty morality,—if they affirmed that they brought from God promises to console our troubles, precepts to guide

our practice, hopes to tranquillize the heart in the hour of death—then I would believe. But the apostles have become dim shadows, and their miracles may be the legends of superstition, the myths of an uncritical age. What solid reason is there for believing the Christian story?"

This is our position at starting, and this the point to which I confine my argument. Theories have been built up with great ingenuity, fortified with massive learning, garrisoned by scholars, resting for proof on a complicated system of philosophical, philological, and historical arguments—theories giving a different account of the origin of Christianity from that contained in the four Gospels and in the Acts of the Apostles, and maintaining that there is no trustworthy evidence for the miraculous events recorded in the New Testament Scriptures;—that our Gospels were probably written by unknown authors long after the men whose names they bear were dead;—that the New Testament representation of Christ was the outgrowth of the dreamy and fanatical hopes of the Jewish race;—or that the several Gospels, while destitute of historical trustworthiness, illustrate by their obvious controversial purpose the obscure struggles and tendencies of the early church, are theological pleadings in a narrative form, perpetuating, and, perhaps, exaggerating uninvestigated traditions which supported the particular doctrinal and ecclesiastical opinions of the respective writers. It is urged that the progress of science has made the occurrence of a miracle in any age or country incredible; or, that if a free and open intellect should be ready to consider evidence even of the reality of a supernatural interference with the common course of nature, no such evidence as can satisfy a scientific mind can be produced; so that if the friends of Jesus Christ did declare that He could raise the dead and calm the storm, and that they were able to do the same,

they were deceived by the excitement of their religious passions, they were enthusiasts and incapable of the discrimination which alone could give weight to their testimony,—or else were actual and intentional deceivers.

I am prepared to maintain, that there is plain and incontrovertible argument for the credibility of the miraculous portion of the Gospel history, and to point out the nature of that argument. I shall not try to drive you from Doubt by the terrors of the wrath to come; or to denounce you into belief by calling you bad names if you are in honest difficulty. I shall not try to overawe you by the authority of great men. I shall appeal to your calm judgment, not to your passions. I do not wish to sweep you from Doubt to Faith by a tide of feeling, or a storm of rhetoric,—I want you to walk firmly along a hard-beaten road. I will not attempt to convince you by arguments which do not convince myself. If any link in the chain of proof seemed weak, I would tell you so. It would be to do the foulest dishonour to Christ to attempt, by any of the devices of sophistry to bring a solitary heart to His feet.

When Christ was here, the Devil offered to give Him the kingdoms of this world and the glory of them, without the agony of Gethsemane and the horrors of the Cross; but Christ refused to receive the splendid gift from the hands of the spirit of darkness; and if now, human insincerity or falsehood presumptuously offered to aid His great designs, His countenance would darken with anger and His hand would be uplifted to smite.

At the very outset it seems necessary to remove an idea which might entangle and impede us throughout this inquiry. It is sometimes urged that the historical truth of the Christian records is of no practical importance. To quote the words of a recent writer :—

"Relations which may repose on doubtful grounds as matter of history, and, as history, be incapable of being ascertained or verified, may yet be equally suggestive of true ideas with facts absolutely certain. The spiritual significance is the same, of the Transfiguration, of opening blind eyes, of causing the tongue of the stammerer to speak plainly, of feeding multitudes with bread in the wilderness, of cleansing leprosy, whatever links may be deficient in the traditional record of particular events."—"*Essays and Reviews*," p. 202.

From this it would follow that the question is, after all, of no consequence whether Christ was really born in Bethlehem, according to ancient prophecy; whether He was really descended from David; whether angels filled the night with exulting anthems at His birth; whether He walked through the storm on the waves of the Galilean Sea; whether He raised Lazarus from the dead. The spiritual truths which these events—be they facts or fables—were intended to teach, remain the same. But my reply to this is, that the alleged facts of the life of Christ are of such an order, that their spiritual significance depends upon their historic reality. I am told that the great God, who by His strength setteth fast the mountains, being girded with power,—the Creator of the ends of the earth, who fainteth not, neither is weary,—who gave to the sun his throne of fire, and to the stars their crowns of light,—became man in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, principally that He might pass through great sorrows; and that on the ground of His voluntary and patient endurance of bitter sufferings,—sufferings which would never have afflicted human nature but for sin,—He might rest the moral constitution under which mankind are placed, on a new basis; that because of His own sufferings He can sympathise with ours,—because of His atoning death, He can forgive our sins and confer upon us eternal life; that

when He was here, He proved His august and awful origin by manifesting in many beneficent forms His supernatural power; that after He had died a shameful death, He returned to life again; that He rose in the sight of His disciples into heaven, and that He will come again, to judge the world.

It is not true that, if these facts disappear, the "ideas" remain the same. That God loves me I sometimes find it hard to believe, when I see so much in myself to excite my own hatred and contempt; but if He left heaven, assumed my nature, lived in this very world of trouble, from which, in my sinful impatience, I am sometimes in haste to escape,—was tempted to sin, though He vanquished temptation,—hungered, thirsted,—was weary,—endured insult, mockery, and contempt,—for my sake;—then my faith in God's love has an immovable rock to rest upon. Whether Jesus Christ,—who lived in poverty, who submitted so quietly to injustice and to insult,—was really divine, as He claimed to be, may sometimes plunge me in great perplexity; but if His claims are sustained by incontrovertible miracles, if He called Lazarus from among the dead, and rose Himself from Joseph's tomb, I bow with wonder and fear, and great joy, before God manifest in the flesh. The whole scheme of Christianity rests on the reality of this history. It is a system of facts, not of ideas. It brings us into contact with a Person, not a philosophy. It is a mistake, a ruinous mistake, to suppose that the principles will remain untouched, though the facts should be proved unreal. The question I have to discuss is of the gravest practical importance.

There is a second hindrance to the transition from Doubt to Faith which I wish to remove. Some men have come to think, that in these days a hearty and secure belief in reli-

gious truth is impossible. A few years ago I received a letter from one of the most distinguished and successful of our living scientific men, in which he expressed his surprise that any thoughtful or studious man could declare that he was not seeking a religious creed, but had already found one; and the controversies which have been raging for the last century in Germany and France, and which have extended to our own country, have produced in the minds of many this same impression, that at present there can be no rest for human faith—that doubt is a necessity,—our calamity, not our choice.

But surely, if God has so exerted His almighty power that we find, in the very structure of the earth, indelible records of its operation through myriads upon myriads of years,—ages before the most ancient empires were founded, before man himself was made;—if He has written on the rocks, for our wonder and instruction, the story of forms of life which became extinct hundreds of thousands of years ago;—if He has taken care that there shall be invincible proofs that the ocean once had its bed far beneath the soil on which we are now raising our harvests and building our cities;—if we have the traces still, of the action of mighty volcanic forces in periods so remote that the imagination is confounded in the attempt to conceive of the intervening ages;—it does not seem likely that the appearance of God Himself among men only 1800 years ago, the miracles He wrought to demonstrate the validity of His claims, and to illustrate by material types the spiritual renovation He had come to effect for the human race, can have passed away without leaving deep and imperishable traces of the great revelation.

Let us start with the conviction, that if Jesus Christ was the wonderful Person that the Christian Church affirms Him to have been, we shall be able to find adequate proof of it. To despair of escaping from doubt, to suppose that we can-

not arrive at any certainty on this question, will destroy the possibility of faith.

I have to notice a third and most fatal hindrance, by which many are prevented arriving at any settled religious belief. The method of the inquiry is often completely misunderstood. In every branch of human knowledge there is a certain order of investigation which must be observed, or it is impossible to make any progress. In the higher departments of the exact sciences there are paradoxes which greatly perplex those who have not gone through the elements: to invert the order of these sciences, to begin by studying those questions which cannot be investigated without much previous knowledge, would be likely to betray the student into enormous blunders, or to plunge him into hopeless difficulties. Now, it is our *complaint* that modern scepticism commits precisely this mistake;—it is our *sorrow* that many who are sorely troubled by their doubts, are unable to see that they, too, are conducting their inquiries on a plan which, from the nature of the case, can hardly lead to any happy issue. We bring proof that the four Gospels are trustworthy narratives; and the reply is, that there are serious errors in the Books of Chronicles. We say that there is adequate evidence of the reality of the miracles of Christ; and we are told that the first pages of the Book of Genesis are contradicted by modern science. Now I ask for a fair examination, first, of the proof we can bring of the reality of the Christian history. We believe it to be at least as conclusive as the demonstration of any geological theory. These other questions should be postponed; they will come naturally enough afterwards.

If we had been born in Egypt between three and four thousand years ago, and Moses had come to us with his account of the Creation as part of the Divine message he

was commissioned to deliver, it would have been perfectly legitimate to ask him, if modern geology had existed then, to explain the apparent discrepancies between his story and that which is written in the outlines of mountain ranges, the courses of rivers, the composition of rocks, the structure of fossils. But it is not Moses who speaks to you and me—it is Christ and His apostles: they come to us saying they have a revelation from heaven: our first duty is to examine *their* credentials.

Christian faith consists in a thankful recognition of the Lord Jesus Christ as Son of God and Saviour of the world —in a devout trust in Him for the pardon of past sin, for strength to live a good life in time to come, and for entrance into the Divine glory at last It is this at which I am anxious that we should all arrive. For a time much else may remain uncertain. Let a dark and desolate sea of doubt continue for a time to toss its restless waves over the Books of Moses, the Psalms of David, the tragic history of the Jewish race, the splendour and the gloom, the fierce denunciations, the touching laments, the rapturous and triumphant hopes of Isaiah and all the prophets; let the four Gospels themselves continue partially submerged; never mind though the Evangelists seem, on some points, inharmonious with each other, though their memory seem sometimes treacherous and their arrangement of the Gospel history full of perplexity;—the battle is virtually won if you come to believe that in Jesus of Nazareth God was manifest in the flesh, and that it is your first and highest duty to bow before Him with penitence for your sin and trust in His mercy. And I can promise you, on the strength of the experience of one who, like yourselves, once saw his early faith covered with a boundless sea of darkness, that if you once reach a firm belief in this fundamental fact, the waters shall some day begin to ebb,—shall drain down to the depths whence

they came; and, as the flood retires, that solitary truth, —the manifestation of God in the person of Christ,— shall gradually be surrounded by province after province of Divine revelation, beautiful with fresh verdure and pleasant streams, and rich with yellow harvests; and, hidden deep beneath the soil, there shall be a secret treasure of wisdom and of joy: the gold and the crystal cannot equal it, and the exchange of it shall not be for jewels of fine gold.

One more preliminary observation, and we proceed to the main argument. In this discussion I shall avail myself, with perfect freedom, of the materials accumulated by many great scholars: in such inquiries it is simply impossible to be independent of the aid of others. I offer to guide you by a way my own feet have trodden. I do not profess to have discovered the pass we are about to climb together, or to have made, myself, the path along which we shall walk.

I undertake, then, to show that this story of Christ and of the Christian miracles is not a mere cluster of myths that rose up in the first half of the second century, nobody can tell how or where; that it is not the mere embodiment of wild Jewish expectations; or a mass of untrustworthy traditions, handled variously by the four Evangelists according to the various interests of conflicting parties in the early Church; but a piece of solid history, which will bear all the weight of confidence we wish to rest upon it.

I.

Nearly eighteen hundred years lie between us and the men who first told the Christian story. The journey across seventeen of these eighteen centuries need take us but a very little time: it is, indeed, hardly necessary to say more than a dozen words in proof of the proposition, that we have the

same facts, in the same books, as were read at the close of the second century by Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons; Clement, Bishop of Alexandria; Tertullian, Bishop of Carthage. During the seventeen hundred years which have passed since their days, no scholar, having any claim to be heard, would be bold enough even to insinuate that the Christian records have undergone any change. To make all sure, however, to those who are unfamiliar with these inquiries, let me say that one great and irresistible line of evidence in proof of this, is supplied by the divisions and controversies of the Church. Let me explain my meaning.

For the last three hundred years there has been the bitterest hostility between the Church of Rome and all the Reformed Churches. That the Protestant Churches of England, America, Sweden, and Germany, accept the same Gospels as the Romish Church, from which, in the sixteenth century, they broke away, would be sufficient proof, had we no other, that the Gospels must be older than the date of that separation. If any books written since then, had been received, as of apostolic authorship, by the Church of Rome, the Protestant Churches would not have been persuaded to receive them: if the Protestant Churches had received them, Rome would have pronounced on them her sternest anathemas.

Now, this is a very simple illustration of one of the many arguments which prove that the New Testament has not been corrupted, in its passage from very early times to our own.

Eight hundred years ago, there was a great schism between the Eastern Churches, principally represented, at that time, by the Patriarchs of Constantinople, Alexandria, and Jerusalem, and the Western Churches, represented by the Bishop of Rome.

In the year 1054,—twelve years before William of Normandy conquered England,—the legates of the Pope publicly excommunicated the Patriarch of Constantinople and all that adhered to him. Shaking the dust from their feet, the haughty priests laid on the altar of Saint Sophia, in the very heart of Constantinople itself, an anathema, enumerating the heresies of the Greeks, and devoting them to eternal perdition. The Greek Patriarch answered the Pope with curses as loud and deep as his own.

This, I say, was in 1054; but two hundred years before,—in 867—the middle of the ninth century, the Pope and the Patriarch had excommunicated each other, and fiercely denounced each other's heresies. In the eighth century, the two Churches had bitter conflicts concerning the doctrine of the procession of the Holy Ghost; in the seventh and sixth, concerning the nature of Christ; in the fifth century, Pope Felix deposed and excommunicated the Patriarch Acacius, and for thirty years their churches had no communion with each other. In the middle of the fourth century—that is, in 347—the hostility between the two Churches, on the controversies which followed the Council of Nicæa, was so intense, that the Emperor, having called another council to harmonize the conflicting theologians, the Western bishops were left alone at the appointed place of meeting, and the Eastern bishops assembled in a neighbouring town. And during the whole of the seven hundred years between 347 and 1054, in addition to controversies between these Churches, about doctrines, about ecclesiastical customs, about fasting, about the marriage of priests, there were incessant efforts on the part of the Bishop of Rome to assume authority over the Greek Patriarch; and the Patriarch was incessantly watching and scheming against the ambitious designs of his rival. And yet the Church of Rome and the Church of Constantinople

deliver to us the same four histories of the Life of the Lord Jesus. The richest treasures of the monasteries of the East, and of the great libraries of the West, are manuscript copies of the same sacred books.

These facts alone make it certain that, since 347 at any rate, the history of Christ has been untampered with, either by ignorant superstition or by learned fraud. Had either the East or the West endeavoured to add to the Gospels a solitary discourse as having been delivered by Christ, or a solitary miracle as having been wrought by Him, however successful the attempt might have been in one communion, the hostile Church could never have been induced to sanction the crime. When Pope and Patriarch were thundering mutual excommunications, the attempt on either side to tamper with the Scriptures would have given the other a great victory.

Instead, therefore, of being separated by eighteen hundred years from the time at which these books are said to have been written, we are already virtually standing in the middle of the fourth century.

And it should be remembered that this argument is strengthened and sustained by a long and splendid line of theologians, commentators, and preachers, who during the whole period had been writing on these very books, and whose writings afford irrefragable evidence that they had the same books as ourselves. This argument alone, I say, places us as early as the year 347. Since then, the Greek and Latin Churches have been too constantly at war to have entered into any conspiracy, intentionally or carelessly, to accept and authorize, as of apostolic origin, any books which were not acknowledged then.

I might urge a similar argument, founded on the controversies with heretics, in order to show that, during the

previous hundred years, the books of the New Testament were equally free from all corruption; but it may give a little variety to the discussion if, at this point, I change the mode of proof. We have now arrived at the middle of the fourth century. Well, in the middle and early part of the third, an illustrious scholar was Bishop of Alexandria. His works, may be seen, in Greek and Latin, in four huge folios, in most great libraries. Origen was born in Egypt about the year 185. When he was seventeen, his father suffered martyrdom. The future theologian, the eldest of seven children, wrote him a letter while in prison, exhorting him not to deny the faith, and saying to him (these are the only words of the letter which have been preserved, but they are words which tell the noble temper of the lad): "Take heed, father, that you do not change your mind, for our sake." The heroic boy became a learned man, teacher of the famous Christian school of Alexandria, and one of the greatest authors of his time. Now, he speaks of the four Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, as being received by the whole Church which is under heaven. He mentions the Acts of the Apostles as the work of Luke. He speaks of the Epistles of Paul in a general manner, every one of which, says Dr. Tregelles, he cites in his writings; and he refers to the discussions about two or three of the other smaller epistles which at that time were held to be doubtful by some. But this is not all. The same eminent, laborious, and conscientious scholar, declares that,

> "We can, in his extant Greek writings alone—I speak this from actual knowledge and examination—find cited at least two-thirds of the New Testament; so that had such a thing been permitted as that the Gospels and some of the other books should have been lost, we might restore them, in a great measure, by means of Origen."

Nothing can be more satisfactory in proof that our Gospels

are the same as his. Origen, who usually lived at Alexandria, visited Rome, Athens, and Cæsarea, and, at last, was buried at Tyre; so that his testimony to the universal reception of the four Gospels in his day, is the voice of many countries and many Churches; and his quotations prove, beyond dispute, that they were the same as ours.

Up to this point, I may add that there are none who would venture to impugn the force of the argument. That in the time of Origen—that is, during the first half of the third century—the Christian Church universally received the very Gospels we have, will not be denied. It is never alleged that since that time any popular legends have been incorporated without our knowledge into the sacred history, or that any excited imagination has added to the marvels said to have been wrought by Christ and the twelve apostles. And, indeed, it will be conceded that, at a still earlier date than this, our Gospels in their present form were accepted by the Churches.

In the last quarter of the second century, (A. D. 177) Irenæus, who was probably born in Asia Minor, became Bishop of Lyons. He was a man who, according to the testimony of Tertullian, "was a diligent inquirer of all sorts of opinions,"—studied, that is, the writings of heathen philosophers and heretics as well as of orthodox Christians; and he was a great controversial writer.

Now, Irenæus says, concerning the four Gospels, and I give the quotation at length, for we have arrived at the point where some suppose our solid proof ends:—

> "Matthew indeed produced his Gospel written among the Hebrews in their own dialect, whilst Peter and Paul proclaimed the Gospel, and founded the Church at Rome. After the departure of these, Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, also transmitted to us in writing what had been preached by Peter; and Luke, the companion

of Paul, committed to writing the Gospel preached by him (that is, Paul); afterwards John, the disciple of our Lord—the same that lay upon his bosom—also published the Gospel whilst he was yet at Ephesus in Asia."—*Irenæus, quoted by Eusebius, in "Ecc. History,"* Book V. cap. viii.

And I could give you many other extracts to the same effect.

These very four Books—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—were therefore in the hands of Irenæus, who became Bishop of Lyons in the year 177. The works of Clement who was Bishop of Alexandria, and of Tertullian, who was Bishop of Carthage, during the latter part of the same century, are as unequivocal in their testimony to the same fact.

We have now travelled together seventeen hundred years back—the path has been firm all the way, and there has been no hard climbing.

Let me pause here for a moment to repeat that up to this point there is practically no controversy to be maintained with men of any scholarship, and I have given just an illustration of the proof by which we know that these ancient books have come down to us uncorrupted, for the satisfaction of those who are strangers to these inquiries.

In the year 177, then, Irenæus became Bishop of Lyons. At that time, as we know from Irenæus himself, from Clement and from Tertullian, who were only a little later, that our Gospels in their present form, were received by the churches of Gaul, of Alexandria, and of Northern Africa; and even the most formidable school of modern sceptics will admit the fact. Only about seventy-seven years have passed since John, the last of the apostles, died; can we find a path as firm and plain over these eighty years as that by which we have crossed the previous seventeen hundred years? or is the

path now lost? do we get now into the region of mists? My answer is, that there is a path still plain enough and firm enough: and that the only mists are those which have drifted across from the German Ocean, and which will scatter and vanish as soon as they are touched by a little sunlight. We have eighty years before us, and there is more than one path by which we can cross them.

II.

In the first place, about twelve or fourteen years before Irenæus became Bishop of Lyons, *Justin Martyr* had dared to die for the sake of Christ. Justin was born in Sichem, a city of Samaria, about the year 103. He became a student of philosophy; was first a Stoic, then a Peripatetic, then a follower of Pythagoras, and then of Plato. It was his custom to wander by the sea, in order to meditate on the great questions to which the great philosophers of antiquity had given various solutions. And one day—he was about thirty years of age at the time—he was found there by an aged and venerable man, who explained to him the miraculous evidence of the Christian faith—showed him how it fulfilled ancient prophecies—and exhorted him to study the Scriptures, and to implore God's guidance and blessing. Justin, —who, before this, had been greatly touched by witnessing the heroic constancy with which the Christians endured martyrdom,—followed the old man's advice, and finally became a Christian. Even after his conversion, however, he wore his philosopher's robe, and his writings afford evidence of his philosophical studies. Several of his works remain. In one of them he describes how, in his times, the Christians worshipped. He tells us they met on the day called Sunday, and that, in addition to other observances, they read certain religious books in their assemblies—books which he describes in another place as "the *Memorials*,

which were drawn up by the apostles and their companions."

Now, it is alleged—and this is the very heart of the present sceptical controversy in reference to the New Testament—that these "Memorials" which were read in the Christian assemblies in the time of Justin, were not the same Memorials of Christ's life that we have now; not the same, therefore, as were read in all Christian churches only about thirty years afterwards, in the time of Irenæus; not the same as those which Clement had at Alexandria, or which Tertullian had at Carthage. Here, it is maintained, there is a break in the line of evidence: our modern Gospels can be carried back as far as Irenæus, who became Bishop of Lyons in the year 177, but not as far as Justin, who wrote his first Apology in 140, or a very little earlier, and others of his works ten or fifteen years afterwards. According to this theory, one set of Gospels which had been publicly read in the Christian congregations disappeared; and another set, with marvels which the first did not contain, and professing to have been written by Matthew and John, the apostles of Christ, by Mark and Luke, the friends of the apostles—all four of whom had long been dead—took their place;—took their place not here and there merely, but throughout the Christian world, without any protest, or the tradition of any protest, having come down to us; at a time when there was no central ecclesiastical authority, like that which Rome subsequently possessed, to authorize the change; when heretics were already rising up and exciting controversy; and when, finally, year after year, bishops were suffering martyrdom rather than deny their faith in Christ. The thing is incredible.

But we have evidence that the histories of the Lord Jesus Christ which Justin had, contained the same facts as our own Gospels. It so happens that, from the nature

of the books he wrote—and this causes most of the difficulty — he did not quote the four Evangelists by name, though he refers, as I have reminded you, to the Memorials drawn up by the apostles and their companions — an exact description of our Gospels. But though it was his custom not to name the authors of the Gospels, he incessantly quotes their language. That he does not quote the Evangelists by name proves only that he followed the general custom of those days. It would be very remarkable if a modern theologian, writing on the history of Christ, were not to do it; but the omission was common with the early Christian writers; for instance, Clement of Alexandria investigated the relations between Matthew, Mark, and Luke (the Synoptical Gospels, as they are called), and John, and makes constant and extensive use of the words of Scripture; and yet in his "Exhortations to the Gentiles," while he quotes every Gospel, and all, except St. Mark, repeatedly, he only mentions St. John by name, and that but once; and it is the same with many other writers of that century. But now for two or three of Justin's quotations :—

"At the same time an angel was sent to the same virgin, saying, 'Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb by the Holy Ghost, and thou shalt bring forth a son, and He shall be called the Son of the Highest, and thou shalt call His name Jesus; for He shall save His people from their sins;' *as they have taught* who have written the history of all things concerning our Saviour Jesus Christ.'"—*Apologia I.* p. 75.

"For the apostles, in those Memorials which are written by them, *which are called Gospels*, thus delivered it, 'that Jesus taking bread, blessing it, commanded them to say, Do this in remembrance of me; this is my body; and

taking the cup in like manner and giving thanks, to say, This is my blood.' "—*Apologia I.* p. 98.

"For *in the Memoirs* which I say were composed by the apostles, and those who became their followers, it is written, that 'His sweat fell like drops of blood, while He prayed and said, If it be possible, let this cup pass from me.' "—*Apologia I.* p. 331.

"In giving up the ghost on the cross, He said, 'Father, into Thy hands I commit my spirit,' as *also I learned from the Memoirs.*"—*Apologia I.* p. 333.

Again, the facts concerning Christ, given by Justin, are the same, with an exception here and there, as those given in our Gospels. It was very natural that, living as he did in an age when there were still living, scattered among the churches, many Christians who had known the apostles, heard them preach, met them in private, and listened to their conversations about Jesus—it was very natural that Justin should sometimes refer to facts which are not in our Gospels, but which had come to him by oral tradition, and, perhaps, had been somewhat changed in the process of transmission: but instances of this kind are very few, and very unimportant. The identity between the *Memorials* of which Justin speaks, and our own four Evangelists, you will perceive at once, by the following summary of what Justin relates about Christ:—

"He tells us, that Christ was descended from Abraham, through Jacob, Juda, Phares, Jesse, and David—that the angel Gabriel was sent to announce His birth to the Virgin Mary—that this was a fulfilment of a prophecy of Isaiah (chap. vii. 14)—that Joseph was forbidden in a vision to put away his espoused wife, when he was so minded—that our Saviour's birth at Bethlehem had been foretold by Micah—that His parents went thither from

Nazareth, where they dwelt, in consequence of the enrolment under Cyrenius—that as they could not find a lodging in the village, they lodged in a cave close by it, where Christ was born, and laid by Mary in a manger—that while there wise men from Arabia, guided by a star, worshipped Him, and offered Him gold and frankincense and myrrh, and by revelation were commanded not to return to Herod, to whom they had first come—that He was called Jesus as the Saviour of His people—that by the command of God His parents fled with Him to Egypt, for fear of Herod, and remained there till Archelaus succeeded him—that Herod, being deceived by the wise men, commanded the children of Bethlehem to be put to death, so that the prophecy of Jeremiah was fulfilled who spoke of Rachel weeping for her children—that Jesus grew after the common manner of men, and so waited thirty years, more or less, till the coming of John the Baptist. He tells us, moreover, that this John the son of Elizabeth, came preaching by the Jordan the baptism of repentance, wearing a leathern girdle and a raiment of camel's hair, and eating only locusts and wild honey—that men supposed that he was the Christ, to whom he answered, 'I am not the Christ, but a voice of one crying; for He that is mightier than I will soon come, whose sandals I am not worthy to bear'—that when Jesus descended into the Jordan to be baptized by him, a *fire was kindled in the river* (an addition of Justin's); and when He came up out of the water the Holy Spirit, as a dove lighted upon Him, and a voice came from heaven, saying, 'Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten Thee'—that immediately after His baptism the devil came to Jesus and tempted Him, bidding Him at last to worship Him. He further adds, that Christ Himself recognised John as the Elias who should precede Him,

'to whom men had done whatsoever they listed;' and thus he relates how Herod put John into prison, and how the daughter of Herodias danced before the king on his birthday, and pleased him; so that he promised to grant her anything she wished; and that she, by her mother's desire, asked for the head of John to be given her on a charger, and that so John was put to death.

"Henceforth, after speaking in general terms of the miracles of Christ—how 'He healed all manner of sickness and disease'—Justin says little of the details of His life till the last great events. Then he narrates the triumphal entry into Jerusalem from Bethphage as a fulfilment of prophecy, the cleansing of the temple, the conspiracy of the Jews, the institution of the Eucharist 'for a remembrance of Christ,' the singing of the psalm afterwards, the agony at night on the Mount of Olives, at which three of His disciples were present, the prayer, the bloody sweat, the arrest, the flight of the apostles, the silence before Pilate, the remand to Herod, the crucifixion, the division of Christ's raiment by lot, the signs and words of mockery of the bystanders, the cry of sorrow, the last words of resignation, the burial in the evening of Friday, the resurrection on Sunday, the appearance to the apostles and disciples, how Christ opened to them the Scriptures, the calumnies of the Jews, the commission to the apostles, the ascension."—*Westcott on the Canon of the New Testament*, p. 115.

Nor is this all.

"It has been already shown that the incidents in the life of Christ which Justin mentions, strikingly coincide with those narrated in the Gospels; the style and language of the quotations which he makes from Christ's teaching agree no less exactly with those of the Evangelists. He quotes frequently from memory; he inter-

weaves the words which we find at present separately given by St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke; he condenses, combines, and transposes the language of our Lord as they have recorded it; he makes use of phrases characteristic of different Gospels; yet, with very few exceptions, he preserves, through all these changes, the marked peculiarities of the New Testament phraseology, without the admixture of any foreign element."—*Westcott on the Canon of the New Testament*, p. 122.

This, surely, is proof enough that Justin's Memorials and our Gospels are the same; and when you remember that Justin's first Apology was presented to the Emperor as early, at any rate, as 140, and that he declares that the Christians of his day read the Memorials of the apostles and their disciples in their regular worship, this argument shows that very early in the second century, a few years after the death of John the Apostle, these Memorials must have found acceptance. Is it possible they could have been received so generally, so early, if they had not been written by the men to whom the authorship is ascribed?

But let us return to Irenæus. That his Gospels were the same as ours—ascribed to Christ the same discourses and the same miracles—will, I repeat, hardly be denied by any; the point I am now attempting to demonstrate being, that the Gospels which Irenæus had, were the same that the Christian Church had from the beginning; that he did not use, as apostolic writings, later documents, written by unknown persons, within the previous thirty years.

Now, in addition to what I have already said in support of this position, there is another argument which seems to me irresistible.

About the middle of the second century Polycarp, the

aged and saintly Bishop of Smyrna, suffered martyrdom. He was ninety years of age when he was put to death as a Christian. When the officers came to arrest him, he calmly ordered whatever they should choose to eat and to drink to be placed before them, requesting only that they would allow him one hour of quiet prayer. In the fulness of his heart he continued in communion with God for two hours, and the heathen men who had come to take him were, themselves, touched by his devotion. When called upon by the Pro-consul to curse Christ, the aged saint answered, "Eighty and six years have I served Him, and He has done me nothing but good; and how could I curse Him, my Lord and Saviour?" When he was taken to be burned, and they were about to fasten him with nails to the stake, he said, "Leave me thus. He who has strengthened me to encounter the flames, will enable me to stand firm to the stake." Before the fire was lighted he prayed, "O Lord, Almighty God, Father of Thy beloved Son Jesus Christ, through whom we have received knowledge of Thyself; God of the angels and of the whole creation, of the human race and of the saints that live in Thy presence; I praise Thee that Thou hast judged me worthy, this day and this hour, to take part among the number of Thy witnesses in the cup of Thy Christ."

This heroic constancy was far more wonderful and Divine than the arching of the flames about his body, and other marvels which are said to have happened and may have happened, at his martyrdom.

But what has Polycarp to do with the Gospels of Irenæus? I will tell you. Irenæus, in his book Against all Heresies, says:

"And Polycarp, a man who had not only been *instructed by the apostles, and had familiar intercourse with many that had seen Christ, but had also been appointed bishop by the apostles,* in Asia, in the Church of Smyrna; *whom we also*

have seen in our youth, for he lived a long time, and to a very advanced age, when, after a glorious and most distinguished martyrdom, he departed this life."—*Irenæus, quoted by Eusebius*, "*Ecc. History*," Book IV., cap. xiv.

And again, in a letter of Irenæus to Florinus, a heretic, he says:

"I saw thee when I was yet a boy in the Lower Asia with Polycarp, moving in great splendour at Court, and endeavouring by all means to gain his esteem. For I remember the events of those times much better than those of recent occurrence. For the studies of our youth, growing with our minds, unite with them so firmly, that I can tell the very place where the blessed Polycarp was accustomed to sit and discourse, and also his goings out and his comings in, and the character of his life, and his personal appearance, and his conversations with the people, and *his familiar intercourse with John*, which he was accustomed to speak of, and with others *that had seen the Lord*. How, also, he used to relate their discourses, and *what things he had heard from them concerning the Lord; also concerning His miracles*, His doctrine; all these, in *consistency with the Holy Scriptures*, were told by Polycarp, as he had received them from the eye-witnesses of the doctrine of salvation." — *Irenæus, quoted by Eusebius*, "*Ecc. Hist.*," Book V., cap. xx.

Polycarp was the friend of the Apostle John, and Irenæus had known Polycarp; and yet we are asked to believe that Irenæus received a Life of Christ as having been written by John, which was not written till forty years after John's death.

The friendship between the martyr Polycarp and the Apostle John is assurance enough that, since Irenæus accepted the fourth Gospel as having been written by that apostle, it could not have been written, as alleged, in the middle of the second century.

Or, to assign to these facts their lowest possible value, this friendship absolutely demonstrates that Irenæus would never have acknowledged the present Gospel of St. John, with all its remarkable miracles, as authentic and genuine, if St. John himself had not told a miraculous story. The last extract, indeed, demonstrates that John spoke to Polycarp of the miracles of Christ.

III.

Passing from the four Gospels to the general Gospel history, I have another line of proof, that from the very first that history was what we have now,—that the miraculous element was not added in the second century, but belongs to the first; and this will close the historical argument, of which, I fear, you must all be well nigh weary.

At the close of the first century, there was a bishop of the Church of Rome, Clement by name, who wrote a celebrated epistle to the Church at Corinth. Of this epistle, Irenæus, of whom I have spoken so often, gives a particular description; and the epistle has come down to us. This Clement is the same person, perhaps, that Paul mentions in his Epistle to the Philippians. The genuineness of what is called Clement's first epistle cannot be contested. So highly did the ancient Churches esteem it, that for a time some of them were accustomed to read it in their public assemblies; and at Corinth itself, it seems certain that the Church continued to read it during public worship as late as the year 170. It was written about the year 96, soon after the persecution which the Christians sustained under Domitian. It appears that the Christians at Corinth, retaining their old tendency to turbulence and schism, the spirit which led them, in Paul's time, to divide into parties, and to say "I am of Paul, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ,"

had been quarrelling with great violence about some of their ministers; and there had been an effort made to displace them. Moreover, the old heresy about the resurrection which Paul had condemned in his First Epistle, was not altogether driven out of the Corinthian Church, and needed to be condemned again. The Corinthians determined to seek advice from their brethren in Rome, and Clement, as the chief pastor of the Roman Church, wrote, in the name of the whole Church—not as an infallible pontiff on his own authority—the letter which is still in our hands. Now, in the course of this letter he naturally remembers that this same Church at Corinth had been rebuked before, for the same sin; and he says:

"Take in your hands the *Epistle of the blessed Apostle Paul*. What did he write to you at first in the beginning of the Gospel? Of a truth it was by the Holy Spirit that (ἐπ' ἀληθείας πνευματικῶς) he sent you his letter concerning himself and Cephas and Apollos, because at that time you were forming parties (προσκλίσεις). But these rendered you not so culpable as you are now; for your partiality had for its object celebrated apostles (Paul and Cephas), and a man approved by them (Apollos). But now, on the contrary, consider who are these that pervert you, and who have lessened the high reputation of your fraternal love. It is shameful, beloved, and very shameful and unworthy of your life in Christ, to hear that the firmly established and ancient Church of the Corinthians, by means of one or two persons, is in a state of revolt against its presbyters. And this rumour has extended not only to us, but to those who are no friends of ours (ἑτεροκλινεῖς); so that through your infatuation blasphemies are cast on the name of the Lord, and danger is created for your Church."—*Ep. of Clement of Rome*, cap. xlvii.

This is an unanswerable proof that about the year 96,

only forty years after Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians is supposed to have been written, that epistle was in the possession of the Church at Corinth and known by them to be St. Paul's. Even had this epistle been full of praise, had it conferred on the Church great honour, it is hard to believe that it could have been regarded by them as St. Paul's, if it had not been really his, only forty years after the events to which it relates, and perhaps not more than thirty years after Paul's death. But look into the epistle itself, and see what it contains. Nothing could have induced the Church at Corinth to accept it as a letter of the Apostle's, if he had not written it. It states that one of the members of the Church had been guilty of foul, sensual sin, and that some of his brethren, instead of rebuking the crime, gloried in it as an illustration of their Christian liberty; that, contrary to the uniform practice of believers, they were carrying their quarrels out of the Church to the tribunals of the heathen; that serious heresy on the doctrine of the resurrection had risen up among them; that the most sacred ordinance of the Christian religion had been dishonoured by their gluttonous excess; that they had changed the Lord's Supper into a riotous feast; that in consequence of this many had been smitten with disease, and some were dead. The epistle has in it passages of the most biting sarcasm, and passages of the sternest rebuke. Now is it credible that if this epistle had not been written to the Corinthian Church at the very time it professes to have been written, and by St. Paul himself, the Church could have been induced to receive it as his? and should we have found them with it in their hands thirty years after Paul's death? Clement's reference to it is conclusive proof of its genuineness.

Here, then, in the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians we have an unquestionable production of a Chris-

tian apostle; its genuineness cannot be doubted: this, at any rate, was written, not in the middle of the second century, but in the middle of the first, some twenty-five years after the death of Christ. From it we can learn with infallible certainty what kind of a story it was that the original apostles told, and whether the miraculous events which we believe, were believed by them, or were the growth of the superstition of the next century.

Now in this epistle Paul distinctly recognises the existence of miraculous gifts in the Church at Corinth itself:—

> "To one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another *the gifts of healing* by the same Spirit, to another the *working* of *miracles*;"—that is, supernatural powers existed in the Church, revealing themselves in many forms.

Concerning the structure of the Church of that day, he says:—

> "God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that *miracles*, then *gifts of healing*."

Concerning the substance of the Gospel story, he says:—

> "Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures; He was buried, and *rose again* the third day according to the Scriptures; He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve; after that, He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once, the greater part of whom remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep; after that, He was seen of James, then of all the apostles; and, last of all, he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time."

Here, then—in an epistle, written by Paul to the Corinthian Church in the middle of the first century—is distinct evidence that from the beginning, miraculous gifts were

affirmed to exist in the Church, and that the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, the greatest of all His miracles, was part of the original testimony of the apostles.

I promised to prove that the miraculous element of the Christian story was not introduced in the middle of the second century, but belonged to it from its very origin; and I think I have done it.

IV.

We are now, therefore, arrived at this point—that the original apostles of the Christian faith did proclaim a story of which miracles, which they themselves had seen, formed an inseparable part. Shall we receive their testimony or not?

There are five reasons conceivable for refusing it—

I. *That miracles are absolutely impossible.* It is maintained that the ordinary links of connection between cause and effect are so strong, that no amount of evidence can establish the reality of any interruption of the common course of nature.

The shortest and most effective reply to this, may be given in the words of the calmest and clearest of living thinkers. John Stuart Mill, in his great work on Logic, says:—

"But in order that any alleged fact should be contradictory to a law of causation, the allegation must be, not simply that the cause existed without being followed by the effect, for that would be no uncommon occurrence; but that this happened in the absence of any adequate counteracting cause. Now in the case of an alleged miracle, the assertion is the exact opposite of this. It is, that the effect was defeated, not in the absence, but in consequence of a counteracting cause, namely, a direct interposition of

an act of the will of some being, who has power over nature; and in particular of a being, whose will being assumed to have endowed all the causes with the powers by which they produce their effects, may well be supposed able to counteract them. A miracle (as was justly remarked by Brown) is no contradiction to the law of cause and effect; it is a new effect, supposed to be produced by the introduction of a new cause. Of the adequacy of that cause, if present, there can be no doubt; and the only antecedent improbability which can be ascribed to the miracle, is the improbability that any such cause existed." —Vol. II., p. 159.

You must deny the existence of a God to deny, logically, the possibility of a miracle.

II. *That miracles wrought in an unscientific and remote age are incapable of scientific proof.*

"We do not say," says M. Renan, "that a miracle is impossible; we say that, as yet, it has never been proved that a miracle has been wrought. Let any one claiming supernatural powers present himself to-morrow, with evidences of his pretensions sufficiently serious to be investigated; let him, I will suppose, declare himself able to restore a dead man to life; what should we do? A commission, composed of physiologists, of physicians, of chemists, of persons accustomed to historical inquiry, would be appointed. That commission would choose a corpse, would assure itself that the man was really dead, would appoint the place where the experiment should be made, would arrange all the precautions necessary for the exclusion of all uncertainty. If, in such conditions, the resurrection took place, a probability would be reached almost equal to certainty. * * * But who does not see that no miracle has ever been wrought under such conditions as these? that always the pretender to super-

natural power has selected the subject of the experiment; has chosen the circumstances, chosen the spectators; that, besides, most frequently it is the people themselves who have subsequently created marvellous legends under the influence of their inappeasible thirst to discover, in great events and great men, something divine."

It is wonderfully strange that M. Renan should so confidently make observations like these, with the four Gospels in his hands, and in reference to the miracles they record. Were the miracles of Christ wrought in circumstances arranged by Himself? The miracle of feeding the five thousand, for instance, with a few loaves and fishes; the miracle of walking on the sea; the miracle of curing the blind man that sat by the road side near Jericho; the miracle of silencing the storm? Were they wrought only in the presence of enthusiastic friends? When the chief rulers investigated the reality of the cure of the blind man, were they partial judges? Were the circumstances of His crucifixion in the hands of His disciples, so that they were able to make it a sham death?

I wonder, too, what kind of conception is formed of the intellectual habits of the people of Judæa, when it is urged, as it often is, that the want of scientific culture, the absence of a settled faith in the stedfastness of the laws of nature, disposed them easily to accept apparently miraculous facts. That, in those times, men had not come to the conclusion that there is no province of the material world exempt from the control of settled laws, is freely granted. They thought that "the wind bloweth where it listeth." They did not suppose that rich harvests and mild winters were to be accounted for by any natural causes. There was a broad territory lying all around them, which they thought was governed by chance, or by the arbitrary interference of supernatural powers. But, to read much that is written by some dis-

believers in the Christian miracles, one would imagine that, before the time of Lord Bacon, mankind were perfect strangers to the idea of a settled order in any region of human experience; that, not having been disciplined by the inductive philosophy, nor enlightened by M. Comte, men would not have been at all surprised if, after criminals had been publicly crucified, it had been a common occurrence to see them chatting pleasantly with their friends; that for men, blind from their birth, to be cured by the anointing of their eyes with clay, was a thing which people, who had made so little progress in animal physiology, might be expected to believe without making very careful inquiry, and on the most inadequate evidence.

I can quite conceive that wonders of a certain order might have been accepted as miraculous by the Jews in the time of Christ, which we should feel ourselves perfectly at liberty to account for by natural causes; but, at the risk of seeming to depreciate the importance of modern progress, I am prepared to maintain that the world had existed quite long enough, and that the people of Palestine had reached a sufficiently advanced stage of civilisation, to be perfectly trusted, if we are only sure they were honest men, as witnesses to miracles of the kind recorded in the New Testament.

III. There is Hume's great argument, *that it is not contrary to experience that testimony should be false, but it is contrary to experience that a miracle should be true.*

The reply to this is—first, that it *is* contrary to experience that such evidence as we have in favour of the New Testament miracles should be false. Secondly, that this evidence alleges that the miracles were wrought as evidences of the Divine commission of the founders of a new faith; and, until it can be shown that it is "contrary to experience" that miracles should be wrought in such circumstances, the

second half of Hume's position is as untenable as the first. It is "contrary to experience" that there should be ice on the Ganges at Calcutta, but not contrary to experience that there should be ice on the Neva at St. Petersburg; it is "contrary to experience" that miracles should be wrought without adequate reason, but it has yet to be proved that they would not be wrought, if God had a supernatural revelation to make to man. On this argument of Hume's, I recommend you to read the whole of the Examination of Hume's Doctrine of Miracles, in the twenty-fifth chapter of the third book of Mill's Logic.

IV. Without insisting on any of these general objections, it may be urged that *the apostles were fanatics, and believed, under the influence of religious enthusiasm, that they saw and heard what really never happened.*

V. *That they proclaimed a story which they knew to be false.*

I can refer to these last two alternatives only very briefly.

(*a*) Did the apostles, under the influence of religious enthusiasm, believe that they saw miracles performed by Christ and by themselves, which never really happened?

In answer to this, I reply, that there are limits to the influence of religious enthusiasm on the senses. It is possible for a man, under the excitement of strong feeling, to imagine that he hears mysterious voices, sees strange and glorious forms in the heavens, or holds transient intercourse with spiritual beings. It is possible, too, for ignorant though honest men, to suppose they recognise, in the cure of certain forms of disease, the action of supernatural powers, while the cure has really been effected by the natural influence of strong mental emotion. But could the apostle John have believed, under the influence of imagination, that after Laza-

rus had died and was buried, Jesus raised him from the dead—told the bystanders to unloose the grave clothes—that Lazarus returned to his house at Bethany, and continued to live there—that the twelve disciples sat at dinner with him after his resurrection, in the house of Simon the Leper, while Martha served, and Mary sat at the feet of Christ—that the Jews came from Jerusalem to see the risen man; and that the chief priests and the Pharisees plotted against Jesus because of the reputation and power which the miracle gave Him?

Or could John have believed, under the influence of imagination, that after Christ's own death He returned to life again, met the apostles in the evening of the first day of the week, in the room where they were accustomed to assemble—two weeks running, and talked to them there; that they met Him again by the Sea of Tiberias; that there He actually took bread and fish with them; and held a long conversation with Peter, reminding him, by the thrice repeated question, "Lovest thou me" of how he had thrice denied his Lord in the hall of the High Priest?

Look through John's entire Gospel; there is no trace of fanaticism from end to end. A fanatic would have filled it with miracles. if he had begun to tell wonderful stories at all; but nothing is more plain than that John attached more importance to the discourses which his Master had uttered, than to the marvellous works which were the external evidences of His mission.

Examine, too, Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians, and see whether there is any trace of fanaticism there. Fanaticism is full of spiritual pride, and rejoices in obtaining high personal distinction. Paul thanks God that he baptized none of the Corinthians except Crispus and Gaius, lest any should say that he baptized in his own name. Fanaticism loves to boast of the miracles it claims to have worked

—is filled with excitement at the thought of them, and magnifies their importance. Paul speaks of miracles most incidentally—there are only five or six verses distinctly referring to them in the whole epistle; and, after dwelling for a moment on miraculous gifts, he says:

"But I show you a more excellent way. Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. Though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. Charity suffereth long, and is kind; envieth not; seeketh not her own; thinketh no evil; beareth all things; believeth all things; hopeth all things; endureth all things."

Fanaticism never wrote like this before.

(*b*) But there is another alternative:—the apostles of Christ were conscious impostors; they were not deceived themselves, but they attempted to deceive others, and did it successfully.

This is to suppose that men who constructed the most gigantic imposture the world has ever known, did it, not to get wealth, or reputation, or power; for they endured poverty, contempt, and death itself, in their perilous enterprise; that they were liars to promote the interests of truth, and committed the most complicated crimes to induce men to become virtuous; deliberately forged credentials from Heaven to prevail upon men to desert the temples of idolatry, and to become worshippers of the true God. The theory is monstrous. It is to suppose that men bore false testimony to the

resurrection of Christ from the dead, only to expose themselves in this world to imprisonment, to torture, to death by the sword, in the flames, and on the cross, and to everlasting damnation in the world to come for their fraud, if the doctrines they taught are true.

At Jerusalem, the Acts of the Apostles tell us how they suffered; at Rome, Tacitus, the most philosophic and trustworthy of Roman historians, tells us how they suffered. "They were covered," he says, "with the skins of wild beasts, and torn to pieces by dogs; some were crucified; others, having been daubed over with combustible materials, were set on fire and thus burned to death." These dreadful torments were inflicted upon them in the Emperor Nero's own garden, while he stood in the crowd as a spectator, or drove about in his chariot among the victims of his dreadful cruelty.

But, perhaps, the original friends of Christ, having committed themselves to His pretensions before he was crucified (and to the crucifixion of Christ under Pontius Pilate, and the breaking out again of the Christian religion immediately afterwards, this same Tacitus gives testimony,) perhaps, I say, they felt unable to retreat from their position; and so, spite of their bitter disappointment, carried on their imposture at all risks; although Peter, the boldest of the twelve, who denied his Lord before His crucifixion, was not likely to confess Him afterwards, if He had not risen from the dead. But, infinitely improbable as that supposition is, it fails to account for the facts; for Paul, the greatest of the apostles became a Christian after Christ Himself had been condemned as a blasphemer by the Jewish priests—rejected as an impostor by the people of Jerusalem—crucified as a criminal by the Roman governor; after Stephen, one of the disciples of Christ had been stoned to death, and crowds of men and women had been imprisoned for their faith: and

years afterwards he declared that hunger and thirst and nakedness, calumny, a homeless life, persecution almost incessant and meeting him in almost every land, were the rewards of the apostleship. He did not do this for money, for he worked with his own hands: nor for fame, for he was made as the filth of the world and the off-scouring of all things: nor for the glory of his nation, for the Jews were his bitterest enemies, from his conversion to the moment of his death.

But, except among the coarsest and most ignorant of unbelievers, the theory that the writers of the Gospels were conscious impostors had till recently been almost abandoned;* and if they were not that, then they were the divinely-commissioned founders of a new religious faith.

V.

We have now crossed the eighteen centuries which lie between us and the original preachers of the Christian Gospel. I will suppose that we are standing, face to face, with them and their Master. Here is Peter, who denied his Lord but repented—Thomas, who doubted His resurrection when he heard it from others, but saw, as soon as Christ came to him, that it was indeed the Lord—John, whom Jesus loved—Paul, whom Christ changed from a persecutor to an apostle, by a wonderful revelation on the road to Damascus—Christ

* Strauss, however, in his "New Life of Jesus," recognising the results of Baur's investigations, finds it necessary to give a larger place to conscious and intentional fiction, in criticising the Gospel Histories, than he had given in his previous "Life of Jesus," ("New Life of Jesus," book iii. cap. 25.) M. Renan, too, suggests that the alleged resurrection of Lazarus may have been the result of a conspiracy between Martha, Mary, and their brother; and even seems to intimate that Jesus Himself was a party, after the fact, to the deception. Scepticism is fast drifting back to its old ground—that the writers of the four Gospels were deliberate liars.

Himself, who raised Lazarus from the dead, who healed the sick by a word, at whose touch the glittering eye of fever became calm, the burning brow cool, and the throbbing veins tranquil; to whom those that were born blind came and He gave them sight; the deaf, and they heard with amazement His words of love and power; the dumb, and they proclaimed His praise; Christ, who trod the waves of a troubled sea, to whose voice the tempest listened and was still; Christ, who was crowned with thorns, whose hands were pierced with nails, and who, in His mysterious agony, cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me;" was buried, and for three days remained among the dead, but rose again and was seen by those who had known Him well —first by Mary, whose love and faithful courage deserved this reward; then by Peter, whose troubled conscience and broken heart were soothed by this proof of his Master's forgiveness; afterwards by the rest of the apostles, and by great numbers besides, in open daylight, on several occasions, in various places, so that mistake was quite impossible.

And I ask you whether you will receive their testimony, that they are commissioned by God to proclaim truth which you can obtain through no other channel—promises of love and of blessing which they alone have been entrusted to communicate.

The message that these men deliver is, that God would have you repent of sin—confess it—forsake it—ask Him to forgive you for Christ's sake—and live a better life, relying on Christ's strength to do it. No matter what slight discrepancies you may detect in the Gospel narratives, if the apostles were here to-night with the glory of their miracles about them, would you venture to reject their verbal narratives on account of such discrepancies? No matter though you cannot see how the first chapter of Genesis can be reconciled with geology, or how the arithmetical difficulties

of the Exodus can be solved, if Christ and His apostles were among us now, raising the dead and giving sight to the blind, would you reject their message on account of such difficulties?

The question of the inspiration, not only of the Old Testament, but of the New Testament itself, is a secondary and posterior question. The first question is: Are these Gospel histories, whatever occasional want of harmony we think we find in them, trustworthy narratives? Are they written by honest men, who could not be mistaken about the great facts which they narrate, however, as some may suppose, their memory may have faltered in some of the details of the history? Whether the Gospels are inspired or not,—if their writers are straightforward men, I must be a Christian; I must acknowledge that the Divine mission of Christ is demonstrated by irresistible evidence; and I must devote to Him my heart's most fervent affection, and my life's most faithful service. This is my immediate duty. I may then inquire, *being a Christian already*, what measure of Divine assistance evangelists had, in writing the Gospels, and apostles, in writing the Epistles? Having settled that, I may inquire to what extent the New Testament is responsible for the Old; whether all the Psalms are to be received as having been written under Divine guidance; and in what sense that is true; whether the Books of Kings and Chronicles are absolutely free from error; whether the first chapter of Genesis is a Divine revelation, and if so, how it can be reconciled with modern science?

Other men may travel by other paths from Doubt to Faith; to myself this path seems one of the surest and plainest. I could speak of the weariness and perplexity which are likely to come upon you by the way; of how heart and flesh will sometimes be ready to fail; of how, in all proba-

bility, you will sometimes be disposed to abandon the whole enterprise in despair; but I implore you, by the nobleness of the endeavour—by the grandeur of its issue, if successful—by the tremendous loss which it is at least possible you may sustain if you abandon it—not to listen to the temptations of indolence or of fear.

VI.

And, in conclusion, I ask you to remember that, in examining the religion of Christ and His apostles, you have not merely to consider the exalted claims which they put forth as the founders of a new religious faith, and the wonderful works which were wrought in demonstration of their authority. You must remember that they not only professed to introduce a new epoch in the religious history of mankind, but that they *actually did it;* that what they declared to be their purpose, they accomplished.

Judaism, after two generations of fierce antagonism to the new faith, was swept away; and, ever since, has ceased to be a religious power in the world. Heathenism, wherever the apostles and their followers went, gradually disappeared before their resistless power. At the beginning of the *second* century, Pliny, the Roman governor of Pontus and Bithynia, declared that the temples of the ancient worship in that part of the world had been almost deserted, and that the new faith had spread from the cities to the country places, and that persons of both sexes, and of every rank, had been carried away by it. At the close of the same century, Tertullian, with something of rhetorical extravagance indeed, exclaims: "We are but of yesterday, and we have filled your cities, islands, towns, and boroughs, the camp, the senate, and the forum." In the *third* century, Origen declares that, spite of torture and of death,

immense multitudes in every part of the world had left the laws of their country and those whom they esteemed gods, and given themselves up to the law of Moses and the religion of Christ. In the *fourth* century, the new religion had become so mighty, that, after it had lived through the fierce persecution of Diocletian, the Roman Emperor himself professed to be a Christian; and the faith of the Galilean fishermen received the homage of the masters of the world.

And its subsequent history has been one of conflict indeed, but of glorious triumph. When the mighty empire broke up, and the barbarous tribes came sweeping down from the forests of the North into the fair plains of Italy—though the civilization of centuries was for a time almost destroyed, and the Roman armies were driven away like chaff before the wind—the Christian faith rose victoriously over the fierce conquerors of the empire; and nation after nation bowed at the feet of Christ. And now, wherever there is political freedom and moral purity, wherever scientific inquiry is most successful, and philosophical investigation most active—wherever, among any people, there are conspicuously present the elements of national greatness and glory, you will find that the Christian Church has been the chief fountain of life and power. The foremost races of mankind are those to whom the Cross is a sacred symbol, and whose literature and laws have been penetrated by the spirit of the Gospel. And if, in our own days, barbarous races have been reclaimed from their vices, superstitions, and miseries, it has been the work of that Christ who, in the days of His earthly life, pointed to the lame whom He had made to walk, to the blind to whom He had given sight, to the lepers whom He had cleansed, as the credentials of His mission, and the trophies of His power.

And while these great and substantial benefits have been conferred upon men by the religion we are here to-night

to vindicate and defend, all that is most noble and beautiful in art, all that is most heroic in action, has found stimulus at her altars. Here patriotism has received its purest inspiration; here philanthropy has found its most touching motives; here genius has been impelled to its most glorious achievements; here scholarship has consecrated its choicest treasures. And now, as God shall help us, *we* are ready to devote our strength to the same illustrious cause.

Listen, I implore you, ye exalted intellects of past generations, enthroned now in the reverence and affection of the people of all lands—theologians, philosophers, scholars, poets, statesmen,—who lived and died in the love and service of Christ, and of His Church—Augustine, Bernard, Hooker, Pascal, Milton—listen to us, your descendants, who are fighting still for the faith once delivered to the saints; upon some in our age let the fire of your genius and the fervour of your devotion descend!

And yet, He whom we serve can work great wonders by the feeble, as well as by the mighty. An honest and a fearless heart—an intellect that rejoices in God's strength, rather than in its own—a life made beautiful with the light that shines from the face of God—these, after all, are the great elements of our power. To these, God will give a glorious victory.

John Angell James.

A LECTURE

BY

JOHN C. MILLER, D.D.

JOHN ANGELL JAMES.

I REMEMBER that, some few years before the death of Mr. James, as I was pondering over Birmingham—its restless bustle and its public men—the thought suggested itself, Who, amid this mass of men and women, will leave the largest gap, and be most mourned and missed? I gave utterance to my speculation in the ears of one of our worthiest lay citizens, and in his ears ventured to answer—John Angell James.

He did not gainsay. After a few short years, the gap was made. The mourning and the missing came. How far I was right, the men of Birmingham are judges. That funeral day yet lives in our memories. It was a great mourning in Birmingham. Not in its streets only, but within the walls of that chapel with which his name has become imperishably associated, was a scene, if not wholly unprecedented — for not long before large honour had been done to the benevolent Joseph Sturge—yet not often paralleled. Churchmen, laymen and clergy, who had followed to the threshold, passed in, not for the ostentatious and offensive compliment of a condescending and hollow liberality, but with real sorrow of heart. Our tears were as genuine as those which flowed from the eyes

of Nonconformists; our veneration as profound. We had lost, not indeed a pastor, but a friend; and more than a friend—a brother.

Yet this man was a humble Dissenting minister, of humble origin, who had entered Birmingham, as a Christian pastor, at the age of nineteen years, and lived and preached and worked in it for more than half a century; and died in it, at the age of seventy-four.

There must be something in such a history worth study; something in such a character, and life, and ministry, which will repay both lecturer and audience—when the lecturer's audience is an association of Christian young men.

I was well aware that, in selecting such a theme, I was not selecting a sensational one. The story of John Angell James's life is unusually devoid of stirring incidents, in the common acceptation of that term. In the lives of some men, "truth is strange, stranger than fiction." It was not so with him. His biography will not furnish us with even the small excitement of such removals from place to place as are to be found in the history of most ministers. Following the pillar of the cloud, he pitched his tent in Birmingham as little more than a lad; and never struck it until his pilgrimage was over, and the tabernacle of the flesh put off, and his work on earth finished.

From Gosport to Carr's Lane, at nineteen,—from Carr's Lane to heaven, at seventy-four. I knew him, worked with him, loved him. I venerate his name and memory.

"Now blessed be the gracious God, that He was pleased to prolong the life of His servant, so useful and beneficial to the world, to a full age: that He has brought him slowly and safely to heaven. . . . . May I live the short remainder of my life as entirely to the glory of God as he lived; and when I shall come to the period of my life, may I die in the same blessed peace wherein he died; may I be with him in

the kingdom of light and love for ever."—(Dr. Bates's Funeral Sermon on Richard Baxter (1691): Bates's Works, iv 340.)

Our great reviewers, in the *Quarterly* and *Edinburgh*, sometimes choose a book, and prefix its title to their review, as a mere starting-point or peg for an elaborate essay, in which the book itself is scarcely noticed. I shall not deal thus with my beloved and honoured friend. I am not about to ramble into his times and cotemporaries, and lose sight of him. Yet I would not keep so strictly to the individual as to lose the general principles and lessons illustrated by a life simple in its incidents, but grand in its practical usefulness.

He was born at Blandford Forum, in Dorsetshire, on the 6th of June, 1785, and died on the 1st of October, 1859. He was little indebted to schoolmasters for either secular or spiritual knowledge; nor, as a boy, was he distinguished either for school industry or superior intelligence. In one point more especially, his village master signally missed, in his case, that which was the master's sole ambition with his pupils, to turn them out good penmen. The present veteran Prime Minister of England, if I mistake not, sets a high value on legible penmanship, in our Civil servants. It was well for Mr. James that he never came under his notice as a candidate, or ran the gauntlet of her Majesty's Civil Service Examiners, for he wrote a somewhat illegible hand, illegible sometimes to himself, as his habit of burning his sermon notes, in later years, testified. They were often useless in the pulpit. His biographer and successor, the Rev. R. W. Dale, tells us that "he was a bright, merry boy, with exulting animal spirits, and a kindly, generous temper, and withal a good hand at trap-ball and rounder;" singed a soldier's whiskers, one Guy Fawkes' day, with a squib; and was only saved under the danger of an explosion

in his pockets by the pump spout. The same page of his biographer records two or three incidents of his school-boy life too tempting to be passed over. He had a "battle royal" with a schoolfellow, "which lasted half an hour." "Thirty years passed before the combatants met again; and having talked over the heroic deeds of their boyhood, Mr. James looked his old foe and old friend in the face, and said with genuine and affecting earnestness, 'My dear friend, I hope we are one in Christ.'" Another lad called him a "pug-nosed Presbyterian," and got a good thrashing for his pains. In after years, a Blandford Boniface inquired of a traveller about his old townspeople—"There were two boys of the name of James that went to school with me—what has become of them?" "One of them," said his guest, "has become an eminent Nonconformist minister." "Ay, which is that?" "John Angell." "What! thik (Dorsetshire for *that*) thickheaded fool—why, he was fit for nothing but fighting!"

Yet afterwards fit to be a Christian pastor for more than fifty years, and to write "The Anxious Enquirer." In this pugnaciousness "the boy" was not "father to the man." The organ of combativeness subsided under peace principles.

"An ounce of mother," said Sydney Smith, "is worth a pound of clergy." As we read the biographies of great or godly men, we are prepared to hear that a mother's prayers and a mother's training were among the earliest means employed by God in the formation of their character. Her "son John" was sometimes felt by Mrs. James to be her "chief trouble," but she did not cease to pray for him. And when, as a happy bridegroom, he was again under the home-roof, "Remember, my son, there is nothing so beautiful as an humble Christian"—was her reiterated lesson. His father, himself a draper and button manufacturer, intended him for business, and discouraged his first leanings

towards the ministry. Poole was the place of his apprenticeship. His complaint, that "after shop hours" he "had no place to retire to but the kitchen, and therefore no companions to associate with in the house but the servants," presents in bright contrast the higher standard of responsibility now recognised by many employers, both in London and in the provinces, in the care of their indoor apprentices. The young men of London and of Birmingham, in not a few houses of business, can gratefully attest the change. Would that all employers had got beyond the Poole draper in this matter, and that the home elements were universally diffused among their apprentices after business hours and on the day of rest! And would, too, that those of our employers who do thus recognise their duty to young men and young women beneath their roof, had not too often to complain justly that their efforts are so little appreciated, and the provision liberally made for home comfort, harmless recreation, and self-improvement, found ineffectual against the attractions of the tavern, the saloon, and the casino!

Childhood had passed without spiritual concern or light. But notwithstanding the disadvantages of an inconsistent master, whose wife was not even a professor, and of a ministry little calculated to interest him, the heart of the young apprentice was now the subject of the gentle and secret stirrings of Divine grace. God was beginning the "good work."

This work was helped forward by an incident familiar to you all, but too valuable in its teaching to be omitted. I remember to have read of an apprentice lad who was put into a sleeping-room with several others, and who, on his first night under his master's roof, was tempted to jump into bed and say his prayers there, lest he should be laughed at for kneeling at his bedside. Principle triumphed, and when he had kneeled down his head was assailed by a small

hurricane of boots and shoes. The next night the temptation returned—should he avoid the storm by praying in the dark and in bed? Again principle triumphed. Again the hurricane. He persevered. A few weeks elapsed, and, with scarcely an exception, every one of his fellow-apprentices and shopmates was on his knees before getting into bed. Mr. James speaks of a fellow-apprentice as, "in some sense, the occasion of" his "conversion." Yet, strange and sad to tell, the young man in after years acknowledged that, although he thus kept up the form of godliness, and, as my narrative will in a moment show, went somewhat further, "he was a stranger to the power of true religion." But, on the first night of his coming under the roof, this young man knelt down at his bedside, in Mr. James's presence, for silent prayer. "I shall ever have reason to bless God," writes Mr. James, "for this act of Charles B——."

Thus early in life may we be called on to confess Christ. Thus early may our influence tell, and tell mightily. "God hangs great weights on slender wires." On the one hand, there is no solitude in sin. No man perishes alone in his iniquity. Achan like, we drag others down with us. We may be sluggish, or lukewarm, or indifferent; but neutral we cannot be. Professor Hitchcock tells us that, as the result of "the principle, long since settled in mechanics, action and reaction are equal, every impression which man makes by his words or his movements upon the air, the waters, or the solid earth, will produce a series of changes in each of these elements, which will never end." That "the word which is now going out of my mouth causes pulsations or waves in the air, and these, though invisible to human eye, expand in every direction until they have passed round the whole globe, and produced a change in the whole atmosphere; nor will a single circumgyration complete the effect; but the sentence which I am now uttering shall alter the whole

atmosphere through all future time." The same is true of every keel which ploughs the sea; of every footprint of man or beast upon the earth. And thus, according to what he terms "The Telegraphic system of the universe," Creation is converted "into a vast sounding gallery; into a vast picture gallery; and into a universal telegraph."* In the instances given by Professor Hitchcock, the results are so infinitesimal and subtle as to be inappreciable by our powers; and they appear incredible. There is a moral telegraphy in our world. An unconverted apprentice, keeping up the habits of his boyhood, kneels down (not to pray, but) to say his evening prayers. And when, in after years, the pastor and author of world-wide usefulness and fame sits down as an autobiographer—"I shall ever have reason," he writes, "to bless God for this act of Charles B——."

Many a young man before me has had to pass through the same ordeal; as a boy at school, or as an apprentice. In the same bedroom with others who are prayerless—haply, who make a mock at prayer—shall he do as did Charles B——? or shall he avoid the sneer and the missile? We know not what results may hang upon our simple consistency. This apprentice's prayer was a link in God's chain of purpose and of means for the full conversion of one who was a vessel of mercy; and was, in due time, to be an honoured workman. At a Social Science gathering in Birmingham, some years since, Joseph Sturge invited me to meet some of the notabilities at breakfast. Among the guests were Lord Brougham and Earl (then Lord John) Russell. The good old Book, the Book of God, was on the breakfast table. The chapter was read; and, after the manner of the Society of Friends, the pause made for silent prayer. I was deeply touched. I admired the simple con-

* "Religion of Geology," American edition, 1851, pp. 410, 411.

sistency of the man who had not put forward his hour of family prayer, for the occasion, but kept to his time and to his habits, and unostentatiously, but uncompromisingly, confessed his Master. And I asked myself, how many of us would have done the same?

By his own request Mr. James was taken by this same Charles B—— to the house of a godly cobbler, who, by God's grace, was a chief instrument in deepening his impressions and developing his spiritual life. That voice which, for more than fifty years, led the prayers and praises of the Carr's Lane Church, stammered forth its first audible prayers, in the ears of a fellow-man, from a small place in the cobbler's house, boarded off from the room, and in which coals and sundry odds and ends were deposited. Thomas Scott, the commentator, was one day passing the house of Mr. Old, the shoemaker, where William Carey, the great Baptist missionary, had worked as a journeyman shoemaker (the "consecrated cobbler" of Sydney Smith's cruel and wicked sarcasm),—"That," said Mr. Scott, "was Mr. Carey's College." Mr. Marshman, in telling the story, well adds, "Seldom has so humble a college turned out so distinguished a graduate."* And it was in the house of the Poole cobbler, in a room of eight or ten feet square, that the God who put Moses to school, first at the court of Pharaoh and then in the desert, who trained the son of Jesse at the sheepfold, and Saul of Tarsus at the feet of Gamaliel, was educating John Angell James for a foremost place in Birmingham; and for usefulness, not in universal Christendom only, but throughout the heathen world.

Prayer, Christian fellowship, and the ministry of the Word, now combined to develop rapidly, and to mature the life of God within his soul. He who had been brought

* "The Story of Carey, Marshman, and Ward," by John Clark Marshman, p. 3.

to his knees by the example of a fellow-apprentice, now walked, on one occasion, upwards of twelve miles, starting before three o'clock on the Sunday morning, that he might not miss the early prayer-meeting ; and became a Sunday-school teacher. The irrepressible desire to enter into the ministry gradually arose within his heart. Encouraged by Dr. Bennett, he left home in 1802, to study under Dr. Bogue, at Gosport.

God digs his stones from strange quarries. And strange are the tools and the processes by which they are outhewn, and shaped, and polished.

> "There's a Divinity that shapes our ends,
> Roughhew them how we will."

He who, in olden time, took David from the sheepfold, Elisha from the plough, Amos from his herds and sycamores, apostles from fishing smacks, the greatest of apostles from the ranks of the bitterest persecutors ; and, in these latter days, has called a Carey from the awl and last, a Henry Martyn from among senior wranglers, an Adam Clarke from linen-weaving, a John Williams from ironmongery,—called Angell James from a draper's counter. And, as we advance in the story of his life, we are met by what, if we put on our ecclesiastical spectacles, must be deemed irregular. A vast change has taken place in the ministerial instruction and training of Dissenting ministers since our young Blandford tradesman was taken in hand by Dr. Bogue. Dr. Bogue was no great classical scholar. The chapel vestry was the divinity hall. Mr. James had, at least, one illustrious fellow student, Dr. Morrison, afterwards the missionary to China. But he had no chance of becoming a great scholar. Before he was eighteen he was preaching. Before he was twenty-one he was ordained as pastor at Carr's Lane, having been such, in fact, for eight months.

In a brief sketch of the Life of Mr. Joseph Phipson,* —one of the oldest and most valued members of the Carr's Lane congregation,—a letter is inserted which contains a passage not without interest, as bearing upon God's dealings. An overture in another quarter having failed, the writer (Mr. Rogers) says, "I think there will be no impropriety in . . . . . asking him (Dr. Bogue) . . . . . whether he can give us any assistance. That will bring on something about the *young man Mr. B.* (Bennett) *spoke of;* but we must have an older man, if possible."

In a document written subsequently, Mr. Phipson reviews the causes of the prosperity which had marked their progress at Carr's Lane, and among them—"Mainly—so far as instrumentality goes—in the rich profusion of spiritual gifts, wisdom, prudence, temper, and practical good sense, with which our present honoured pastor (Rev. J. A. James) has been endowed."

As a precedent of universal application this would be most mischievous. But, if the phrase may be allowed, there are eccentricities in God's providence, as it bears both upon the Church and upon the world. God has exceptions to His rules. But a few months since, passing through some of the grandest scenes in Switzerland, amid forest-clad mountains, there were moments when no single tree arrested my eye; it took in a vast aggregate of beauty. But often the road, for miles, was by the side of the rapid river, across whose bed vast boulders of rock had been hurled, dislodged by storm and avalanche from their ancient heights; and from these boulders, and their coating of mossy soil, had sprung up, not the wild flower only nor the shrub, but a tree of goodly girth, full grown, tall, branching, vigorous. Ten thousand others were in their places, in comparative regularity, on the mountain sides—the individuality of each lost in the sweep of the

* Printed for private circulation only.

whole forest. But this solitary tree, in its eccentric growth, —the sole possessor, save a few ferns and mosses, of the rock on which it grew,—stood forth in its solitariness, unique and an object of interest. It seemed strange that it could find root on so superficial a depth of soil.

It is thus, ever and anon, with God's trees of righteousness; the planting of His right hand. The Almighty will show His sovereignty, His omnipotence, His independence of creature means and agencies by eccentric dealings; by fetching His stones, as I have said, from strange quarries, and working them by strange and, apparently, unfit and unlikely instruments. The Head of the Church trains in His own way for His own work. Mr. James was the last man to propose his own case as a wise precedent, and among the first to recognise the importance of ministerial training, of scholarship, and of learning; among the first to rejoice in the means now within the reach of students for the Dissenting ministry. Witness his deep and unflagging interest in Spring Hill College.

As a general rule, we of the Church of England desire for our ministry men academically trained. Dunces we would fain eschew entirely. And we do not the less value our Oxford, our Cambridge, and our Dublin, because God, in the dispensing of His gifts, sends us some valuable men from minor colleges, and as literates. As in the case of miracles—and it is no slight *à priori* argument in their favour—God reserves to Himself, and has largely exercised, the prerogative of dispensing with His own laws; so with the ministry of His Church: He has not seldom shown—and may not seldom show again—that He is independent of Oxford, or Cambridge, or Spring Hill, in thrusting forth labourers into His harvest. "Is Saul also among the prophets?" "Is not this the carpenter's son?" Yes. It is the Lord's doing, and He doeth according to His will.

But, if Mr. James entered the ministry, not only without academic distinction, but without academic training, whence came the acquirements which made him so able a preacher and so prolific a writer? Not by miracle. He was pre-eminently a man of self-culture. There are few points in which his character and life are more instructive to young men. If ever it was true of man that he traded with his talents, and gave back to his Lord His "own, with usury," it was true of this man. Had John Angell James been an idler, he would have lived and died comparatively useless, unhonoured, and unblessed. He was not a genius, not a man of the highest order of intellect—a profound reasoner, or a poet with luxuriant fancy. He was neither an Irving, nor a Chalmers, nor a Robert Hall, nor a Winter Hamilton, nor a Jay—still less had he the dangerous wit of Rowland Hill; but to the utmost he cultivated his natural powers. He stirred up the gift of God, and he became a preacher, largely blessed of God to the salvation of men, a prolific and widely read writer; and in this, intellectually regarded, he was, in my judgment, greatest. A first-rate public speaker. Greater as a speaker than as a preacher or an author; rising to higher flights of mental power—more lively, more impressive, exhibiting more true and touching pathos, and not seldom enlivening all by a playfulness which never degenerated into irreverence, coarseness, or buffoonery. I have heard most of our best clerical speakers in the Church of England, and some among Nonconformists; but there were few, very few, whom I saw with greater pleasure rise upon a platform than Mr. James. Mr. Dale's phrase is true and happy—"The oratorical instinct which was born with him." His son, in the interesting sketch of "Home Life," with which Mr. Dale's "Life and Letters" is enriched, well says, "He seemed to me to be by nature an orator," and adds that the celebrated Lord Holland more than once expressed his

admiration of his speaking, and declared that, as a persuasive speaker, he was surpassed only by Charles James Fox and Lord Chancellor Plunkett.—(pp. 589, 592.)

We must agree with his biographer in his criticism on some of his earlier speeches, much as they were admired at the time of their delivery—they were sometimes false in taste and deficient in simplicity and in chasteness of imagery; but, in later years, he lost somewhat of this efflorescence, and the riper fruit was rich and wholesome and pleasant. It was a well-known remark of Mr. Simeon's, as the result of lengthened observation and experience, that the men whom he had seen most blessed of God to be useful in the ministry were men of moderate abilities, decided piety, and great industry. I qualify the remark, ere I apply it to Mr. James, because "moderate abilities" would be too weak and disparaging a term for his power of mind. But his history reminds me of Mr. Simeon's words. And without, for one moment, undervaluing God's great gift of genius, in any direction, or denying that it is through the genius of the few that God has given some of His best gifts in science, art, and literature, to the many—without lowering Homer, or Plato, or Shakspeare, or Bacon, or Milton, or Newton, or Chatham, or Washington, or Watt, or Wellington, or Robert Hall, or Chalmers, from their niches in our temples, I must record to the young men who are listening to me my conviction that, after all, it is by the diligent self-culture, the persevering and plodding industry, the conscientious work of average men that, both in Church and State, in our parishes and congregations, in our pulpits and Sunday-schools, in our counting-houses, warehouses, and shops, the great mass of the Church's and the world's work is to be done.

As you contrast the draper's apprentice in the cobbler's shop at Poole with the venerated pastor and the man of

world-wide fame upon whom the men of Birmingham showered their jubilee congratulations and magnificent jubilee gifts—every one of them proud of him, and every one who called him pastor thankful to be of his flock—and remember that the intermediate training was neither at Oxford nor Cambridge, nor Hoxton, nor Homerton, nor Spring Hill, you see, it is true, the wondrous leadings of Divine providence, the wondrous dealings of the Church's Head; but, on the human side of the contemplation, you see also what may be done by Eliot's watchword, "Prayer, pains, and God's blessing." There may not be a genius in this Hall to-night—no "bright, particular star." "To another, one"—not five talents. Are you that servant? Where is the one talent? In a napkin? In the earth? What, then, of the reckoning, when, after a long time, the Lord of the servants cometh? Is this the sentence which awaits thee, "Thou wicked and slothful servant?"

There need be none here who shall be useless in his day and generation—none who shall not leave footprints on the sands of time. Young men! redeem life. Snatch moments of leisure. Let not sensational stories and light reading be all your mental *pabulum*. Still less, let *cafés* and low concert halls be your evening resorts. Let not enlightened employers complain that their early closing has been turned by you into a mischief and a curse; that the reading-room and the library which they have provided are deserted, and that the disgusting *poses plastiques*, or the obscenities of "judge and jury" meetings, or the low ribaldry of comic singers, or the degrading and puerile follies of "niggers" and "bones," are too strong a counter attraction. You have in this very Association advantages unknown to the young draper of Poole. He was driven by stress of necessity to a cobbler's shop for what you

may find in Aldersgate-street,—well-stored bookshelves, Bible classes, lectures, godly companions, brotherly counsellors. The insane rage for pleasure which is characteristic of our day, was to me deeply and anxiously deplored by Mr. James. Self-culture is one great lesson to be learned from his career; as, yet more strikingly, because under far greater disadvantages, from the career of George Stephenson, practising "pot-hooks" at nineteen, and paying to Robin Cowens, the Walbottle schoolmaster, threepence weekly as a night school fee; increased to fourpence, when Andrew Robertson, the Scotch dominie, added the third R ('rithmetic) to the reading and the (w) riting.

Chronologically, I shall be disregarding the order of events and anticipating largely; yet in this connection I may best adduce some proof of Mr. James's labours and usefulness as a writer, by reminding you that the Religious Tract Society alone had, at the time of his death in 1859, circulated nearly three millions of his books and tracts. His usefulness seems, in some aspects, to have had few precedents. As I contemplate it—even that scanty measure of it, which we may venture to estimate before the discoveries of the great day—my own ministry seems to have been little better than seven-and-twenty years of idleness and unprofitableness.

"Anxious Inquirer," in five languages, from the Depôt—English, Welsh, Italian, German, French, besides an unknown number in Spanish, Portuguese, Armeno-Turkish, and one or two Indian languages	586,443
"Pastoral Addresses"	1,049,319
"Young Man from Home"	88,001
"Christian Progress"	37,817
"Believe and be Saved" (32mo)	30,260
Ditto, ditto (tract)	450,900
"Path to the Bush"	13,813
Carried forward	2,256,553

Brought forward	2,256,553
"Elizabeth Bales"	8,262
"Your Great Concern"	128,250
"Pious Collier"	121,575
"Man that Killed his Neighbours"	416,310
	2,930,950

You will not expect from your lecturer a lengthened and minute history of Mr. James's pastorate at Carr's Lane. The young minister, appreciated from the first by ripened and venerable Christians in his congregation, remained in this his first and only pastorate throughout his life. This, of course, was one of the causes which contributed largely to his public influence, no less than to his hold upon his people's confidence and affection, in later years. He was never transplanted. He struck his roots deep, and no fibre of them was ever injured. Thus at his jubilee, and long before his jubilee, he was strong in the cumulative influence of a lifetime, concentrated on one congregation, in one town. Not a particle had been lost by removal from place to place. He never had to begin again. Mr. Dale has recorded a wise counsel of Mrs. James, his excellent wife, given to him at a season when discouragement was producing restlessness,—"Never leave Birmingham, till you see your way out of it as clearly as you did into it."

A golden counsel for restless ministers, restless from natural fickleness, or, Elijah-like, from morbid querulousness and impatience. Let such remember what the biographer records,—"That Mr. James's ministerial life commenced with seven years of apparent failure;" so apparent as greatly to dishearten and distress him. He learned, as years rolled on, what his own pen has recorded, "That a man does as much by his character as by his talents; and that confidence is the growth of years." It

would have been an element of no small strength to a less gifted and able man, that, by the safe-keeping of his faithful God, and through the power of His grace, he was kept, with consistent life and unblemished character, in a conspicuous post, for more than fifty years—until he had identified himself with Birmingham; so that, wheresoever its name was mentioned, no living man rose up more immediately in the mind of hearer or speaker, as identified with it, than did John Angell James. His people became proud of him. And few congregations, whether among Dissenting denominations or within the Church of England, enjoyed so long a period of unity and peace as that which marked his pastorate. In the government of his people he is described to me (for here I must be beholden to others) as simple-hearted and straightforward. He had in one of his brothers, who possessed a governing mind, a wise counsellor and helper. He had, I am told, the happy sagacity and tact which I could wish that we ministers all possessed, of seldom venturing on anything without being tolerably well sure that his deacons were unanimous and his people were prepared for it. We may presume that, had he been a Church of England clergyman, he would not have set his parish in a flame for a pair of candlesticks, a surplice, a tone, or a genuflection. He managed unreasonable dissentients playfully and wisely. It is among the traditions of Carr's Lane that, when the "Sanctus" had been introduced into the service, an outspoken man objected: "Why, sir, it doesn't go beyond Sinai; there's nothing of Calvary in it." "Come, come," said Mr. James, "you look into the Book of Revelation, and you'll find that the seraphim sing it in heaven; what's good enough for them is surely good enough for you."

"In the administration of the Lord's Supper," writes one

of his people to me, "he was pre-eminently happy. It seemed the occasion of his highest and closest public communion with God and with his fellow Christians. His spirit was obviously pervaded with a sense of the benignity and love that characterised the Divine Majesty; and his filial gratitude and joy were manifest and overflowing. I have never witnessed," he continues, "such exhibitions as he presented at the table, of a human heart delighting itself in God, and gathering strength and consecration for future service."

Another writes to me: "Striking as were his sermons, oftentimes they were almost eclipsed by his addresses at the administration of the Lord's Supper, when he seemed as if in the immediate presence of the great Master of the feast, and as if the glories of heaven were visible to him, without a veil between; and he was anxious that his much-loved flock should share with him in the sublime enjoyments of that fleeting hour; and never did holiness seem so lovely, or sin so hateful, or self-deception so awful, as when he dwelt upon the happiness, even in this world, of leading a God-like life; and thus, as far as the finite can attain, resembling the Infinite. And when, in terms of peculiar solemnity, he urged each to ascertain, ere the bread and cup came round to them, whether they had examined themselves, cold indeed and insensible must have been the heart which did not vibrate to the touch, and, though conscious that love to the Lord was there, silently implore the aid of the Great Teacher of hearts in the all-important investigation. His addresses to the non-communicants in the galleries were very striking and solemn; and many, on becoming communicants, ascribed their conversion to what was said at these seasons."

As a preacher, he has left behind him no grand masterpieces which are identified with his name, as did Maclaurin,

in his "Glorying in the Cross of Christ;" Robert Hall, in his "Modern Infidelity" and "Funeral Sermon on the Princess Charlotte;" and Chalmers, in his "Expulsive Power of a New Affection." But few preachers were more useful in their day and generation. At one time his great intimacy with and admiration of American preaching tended much to foster the adoption of the *awful* style of preaching. He dwelt a while on gloomy subjects, and, in a few instances, nearly drove away hearers. But these topics were not the usual staple of his sermons.

"My father's *forte*," writes his son, "lay in expository lectures on the historical parts of Scripture," "and in inculcating moral and religious duties." "His ethical sermons," in the judgment of Mr. Dale, "were among the ablest and most powerful that he ever delivered." But I am assured, by an intelligent and discriminating member of his congregation, that "the effect produced by his delivery was far beyond anything that the printed pages indicate. There was an unction and earnestness about his utterance that I have scarcely known in any other preacher. He seemed always to realize his position, as an ambassador for Christ; and spoke as under the influence of this realization. The evident sympathy of his own heart with the truth he was presenting attracted the sympathy of his hearers, and imparted interest and impression to all his services. Even an old sermon," adds my kind informant, "never seemed an old one, but had a perpetual freshness."

His theory and standard of preaching may be gathered from his useful introduction to Dr. Spencer's "Pastoral Sketches." "In all preaching," he urges, "there should be a prevalence of the converting element; *i.e.*, of truths, and the manner of treating them, which are likely to rouse the hearer to the state of his soul; to show him his condition as a sinner; to awaken a deep solicitude for his

eternal welfare, by convincing him of his danger; to make him feel the necessity of repentance and faith; and to urge him to flee, without delay, to Christ for salvation."—p. xxiv.

At the close of the same Introduction he writes, on this point, so wisely, so touchingly, so solemnly, that, though the extract is somewhat long, I must enrich my lecture with it.

"My brethren will forgive me, I hope, if I suggest that there is amongst us all—if we look at the stupendous truths and momentous objects of our ministry—a criminal supineness and a lamentable deficiency of the burning zeal which should characterise our activity. Amidst the hurry of our work in this age of bustling energy, we have too little leisure to reflect upon our mission, and inquire into the manner in which we are fulfilling its requirements and terrible responsibilities. A time of seclusion, when sickness of a serious nature dismisses us from the pulpit and the study, and shuts us up in the chamber of solitude, and leaves us alone with our conscience, is sometimes granted to us as an opportunity of self-conference, and offers to us a befitting opportunity for a fresh survey of our work, and for a solemn scrutiny into our means of executing it. Ah, then, when the hours pass slowly away, and the time is occupied between solemn recollections of the past and still more solemn anticipations of the future; when actions are scanned and motives are weighed; when it seems probable that all stewardship is over, except the account to be rendered to the Great Master, and when the audit is looked for as very near; then how differently do we judge of the momentous importance and responsibility of the ministerial office from what we do while busily engaged in its various functions! How really awful a thing does it then appear to us to watch for souls, and to give account of the manner in which we have performed our duties! Such, as is well known, has been my situation of late. The hand of God arrested me in the midst of my

labours, and sent me to my chamber, where, in days of weakness and in nights of sleeplessness, I reviewed a ministry, not altogether inactive nor unprofitable, and which has been protracted beyond the ordinary length of service; and oh, how clearly and impressively did the great object of the ministry, as designed for the salvation of souls, come out upon me anew! How worthless, in those somewhat awful moments, did all other ends, compared with this, appear to my mind! How deeply humbled did I feel under the conviction of the imperfect manner in which this great object had been sought! And how full was my determination, should my life be longer spared, to make this the great and only object of my remaining days! It seemed to me then, as I have expressed it elsewhere, as if we were all loiterers together in the vineyard of the Lord, and as though 'a workman that needed not to be ashamed' was rarely to be found, since Whitfield and Wesley have gone to their rest.

"I am still in circumstances calculated to give solemnity to my reflections, and perhaps some weight to my words. The pressure of disease upon my bodily frame has been lightened, but it has left me no longer 'strong to labour.' I am on the verge of old age, and the subject of not a few of its infirmities. The evening of life is come, and with it some of its clouds. Should these clouds, however, only furnish a new theatre on which to display the lustre of my setting sun, and afford me an opportunity of glorifying Christ by the passive virtues of the Christian character, they ought to be more welcome than even a clearer sky. It is now some consolation to me to recollect, that amidst innumerable defects—which, if affection has concealed them from the notice of my friends, are humblingly known to myself—I have, in some measure, ever kept in view the conversion of sinners as the great end of the Christian

ministry, and therefore of mine. I started in my preaching career, while yet a student, with this before my eyes, as the great purpose for which I entered the pulpit. This I have kept in view through a ministry of half a century. This I now look at, with undiverted eye, in the latter scenes of my life; and, taught both by my own experience, and by observation of all I have seen in the conduct of others, were I now beginning my course, instead of gradually closing it, I should most deliberately choose this as my ministerial vocation, and consider that my official life would be almost a lost adventure if this were not in some good measure its blessed result. In the pursuit of this object, notwithstanding all my defects and manifold imperfections, I have had my reward. I speak thus, not in a way of boasting, but of gratitude, and for the encouragement of my brethren in the ministry, especially its younger members.

"God will never suffer those altogether to fail in their object who make the conversion of souls their great aim, and who employ, in earnestness of prayer and action, His own methods, and depend upon His own Spirit for accomplishing it.

"Ministers may think too little of this now, and the work of conversion be lost sight of too much, in their eager desires and ardent ambition after popularity and applause; but the time is coming when these, except as they gave a man a wider sphere for his converting work, will be thought worthless and vain.

"Amidst the gathering infirmities of old age, and the anticipations of eternity, much more at the bar of Christ, and in the celestial world, it will be deemed a poor and meagre reflection to a minister of Christ, that he was once followed and applauded by admiring crowds. The knowledge, then, that he had been the instrument of converting a single sinner from the error of his ways, and saving a soul

from death, will be worth more than the applauses of a world or the admiration of an age, and is an honour for which the crown of royalty or the wreath of victory might be bartered now with infinite advantage. Then, amidst the scenes of the last judgment, and the splendours of immortality, they who have been most eager in seeking, and most successful in obtaining, the richest distinctions upon earth, shall confess that 'He who winneth souls is wise,' and shall see 'that they who turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever.'"—"Pastor's Sketches," p. lxvii.

His stirring treatise, "An Earnest Ministry the Want of the Times"—one of the most valuable of his many writings—contains much that might be quoted to the same effect. The extracts by which he illustrates the "Nature of Earnestness," (chapter v. p. 102, &c. &c.), from Doolittle, Baxter, Howe, Jonathan Edwards, Whitfield, and Mr. Parsons of York, are illustrations of his conception of pulpit earnestness for the conversion of souls.

His theology was utterly untainted by the leprous plague of Rationalism. It was substantially, though not in all the stiffness of the Calvinism of some of them, the theology of the Puritans and Evangelical clergy. No wavering about the inspiration of the Word. No picking and choosing amid alleged myths, blunders, and discrepancies. No paring down of the atonement. No substitution of a generalized, negative, undogmatic Christianity for the positive truths of Scripture and its Gospel. Such, he well knew, would not meet the needs of man. What Gospel shall Broad Church Hebers, or Careys, or Henry Martyns, carry to the heathen? What shall we do at home with the positive, pressing, crushing sins and sorrows of the souls committed to us with nothing but a negative Christianity? Nor was there any idolatry of intellect. It is delightful to know that the

present occupant of Mr. James's pulpit had the wisdom and the grace to write, "Intellectual preaching is preaching in which nine-tenths of human nature are clean forgotten." (p. 609.)

In passing to his other labours, it is unnecessary to do more than remind you that Mr. James's fame as a writer, and probably by far the greater measure of his posthumous usefulness, rest upon his "Anxious Enquirer." When referring to his motives in writing it, "I believe," he says, "I was animated by a pure desire to glorify God in the salvation of souls. Perhaps there was less admixture of self-seeking and vain-glory in the writing of this book than in any other of my works." ("Life and Letters," p. 307.) He declares that, "in the extent of its circulation and amount of its usefulness, it swallows up all" his "other works." (p. 308.) "Had I preserved," he writes, "all the letters I have received, both from other countries and my own, of its usefulness, they would have formed a book. . . . . The tidings have become as common things." He narrates that, "in one of the back settlements of America," where there was no stated ministry, "a single copy of the 'Anxious Enquirer' had found its way. It was lent from one person to another, and seven-and-twenty persons were thus hopefully converted to God by the perusal of the solitary copy found among them." (p. 309.)

Mr. Dale relates, that "eight or nine friends who happened to be together were conversing about their religious history, and they discovered that they had all found in the 'Anxious Enquirer' the guidance and stimulus by which they had been led to trust in the Lord Jesus Christ." (Ibid.) At public meetings men from foreign lands unexpectedly overwhelmed him by grateful acknowledgments of its usefulness to their souls, and owned him as their

spiritual father; the speaker, on one occasion, adding that "he knew of twelve students for the ministry who had been converted by the perusal of that book." In my own "Funeral Sermon, in memory of Mr. James," I narrated a touching scene which I witnessed upon the platform of the Birmingham Town Hall.

"Those of us who were present, some few years ago, at our Church Missionary Meeting in Birmingham, when Mr. James, unknown to Lieutenant-Colonel Hughes, one of the deputation, sat upon the platform, have not forgotten the testimony borne by that fervent-spirited officer to the usefulness of this book; and how, when the presence of the author was made known to the speaker, he grasped Mr. James's hand, and said, with half-choked utterance, 'Oh, sir, I cannot tell you what a blessing that book has been made in India.' Mr. James sat pale with emotion, and his venerable head bowed down in humility, at this unexpected testimony. From that gifted and facile pen have flowed Divine counsels, not to 'The Anxious Enquirer' only, but to Sunday School Teachers, to Young Men, to Young Women, and to Children. The Widow has been directed to the Widow's God; Faith, Hope, and Charity alike enforced and illustrated."

"The day of judgment alone will disclose what has resulted from the issue of this little and apparently insignificant publication." Yet, does its author add, after recording with humble and adoring thankfulness its astonishing circulation and vast usefulness, "Let any critic, or other person of sound judgment, examine the book itself. He will find no literary talent, no philosophical research, no profound theology, no novelties of sentiment, no pretension to logic, rhetoric, or poetry,—nothing but one of the simplest and most elementary treatises in the English language; a book which contains nothing that can puff up its author with pride,—a book

which any one of the thousands of Evangelical ministers of all denominations would have written, had he sat down with such a purpose,—the mere alphabet of the Christian religion, which, whatever cause its success might occasion to its author for adoring gratitude, can certainly yield no materials to feed his pride. Yet this elementary, this simple, this humble, this comparatively insignificant little book has been honoured of God to do a mighty work in the earth, in the way of converting souls!" (pp. 313–14.)

This alone might seem usefulness enough for a life. And were envy a lawful passion, who among us would not envy him the authorship of the "Anxious Enquirer?" But if, as the author of this God-honoured book, Mr. James attained the highest pinnacle of his usefulness, his name is identified with other works heavenly in their aim, grand in their conception, and lasting in their results.

He who had felt the lack of academic training for the ministry, threw himself heart and soul into the important work of providing and maintaining that training for others, upon an enlarged scale and with a wise adaptation to the requirements of the age. For Spring-hill College his labours were abundant. In the Evangelical Alliance he found, as he conceived, a means for advancing a cause than which none was nearer and dearer to his heart—the union of Christians. Many of us have not been able to follow him to that platform. But we can appreciate the spirit, and bid "God speed!" to the aims of its promoters and supporters. Into Mr. Thompson's noble scheme of a Million New Testament Fund for China, he threw himself with all the fervour of his missionary zeal. Though not the author of the project, to him, under God's favour, it owed its success—a success the double of what had been anticipated—a fund sufficient for two millions.

Being placed himself, in the good providence of God, in

a position of pecuniary independence, and being eminently a man of generous heart, he seized the opportunity of his jubilee to found a "Pastors' Retiring Fund." The balance of the sum collected for the jubilee offerings, amounting to upwards of £500, he made up to £1,000, as the nucleus of a provision for disabled and retired ministers. This has now reached £36,000, exclusive of £3,600 in legacies, which have not yet fallen in. Thus, too, do his works follow him, thus will he minister to the cares and wants of worn-out veterans, throughout years to come.

Appeals for pecuniary help from all sorts of people, for all kinds of objects, from all Christian denominations, reached him *daily*, and very rarely was one denied. Even a street beggar or a child was not sent empty away. "I dare say," he would remark, "I am cheated every day of my life, but I would rather give to twenty undeserving cases than refuse one of real distress." For many years he gave away to the cause of God a *third* of his income. "Talk of a tenth!" he would say, "it is paltry!"

And his laboriousness is a prominent feature in the example which he has left us. "At that time" (1852), writes one of his people to me, "Mr. James was fulfilling, without assistance, all the duties of his ministry and pastorate, preaching in both the sabbath services, and on Wednesday evening, administering the ordinances, presiding at weekly prayer-meeting, and monthly church meeting, and attending, as far as possible, church district meetings, and anniversary, and other periodic gatherings in connection with the various institutions promoted by his church and congregation, such as Sunday-schools, Brotherly Society, Ladies' Missionary Working Party, &c. &c. In all circumstances, everywhere and always, he presented the unvarying aspect of one who had a great work on hand, and was solemnly, earnestly, and cordially devoted to its accomplishment. It

seemed never out of sight. 'One thing I do,' was not more appropriate as an utterance of the Apostle than it would have been of Mr. James, in reference to both his own religious culture and the full discharge of his work. He was ceaselessly engrossed with the ministry he had received of the Lord Jesus."

We are not surprised to hear that, as I am informed by a beloved member of his family, "he was a most rigid economist of his time. And although he was not one of those who consume 'the midnight oil,' in deep and injurious study, or who rise at daybreak to prosecute their researches, it was astonishing how much, during the working hours of each, he accomplished, by this scrupulous economy of time." Of course then he was a *punctual* man. "Punctuality," he once said to me, while we were pulling out our watches and dancing attendance for some unpunctual colleagues on a committee, "is an expensive virtue." And it must be so until this excellent little virtue becomes universal, for we punctual men lose time through the unpunctuality of others.

It would be beside my present purpose to treat in detail the celebration of Mr. James's jubilee—a celebration far deeper in feeling and far more true in its reality than much of the testimonializing of the day. His loving people loaded him with gifts; and Carr's Lane, and the Townhall, and the site of the Jubilee Chapel were the scenes of solemn and joyful services. Not only dissenters of other denominations than his own, and the representatives of great religious societies, but Churchmen also, united to do him honour and to claim him as the common property of the Church of Christ. Nor were greetings wanting from across the Atlantic. Such a jubilee is a snare to any man. He was well aware of this. In a letter to myself he writes, "I am ashamed and grieved at the notoriety which my friends have given,

and are still giving, to this event. It is, I assure you, no simulated modesty, no affected humility which compels me to say, I blush over my own fame—shall I call it?—from an entire consciousness how little I deserve it; and I now wish I had forbidden all this publicity. Believe me when I say, it is not *my* doing; and could I have foreseen what my friends intended to do, and all the real concern it now produces, I should have passed over the year almost in silence. To me it seems as if a fast were more suitable than a festival, because of the many and great imperfections which the review of fifty years brings out upon my afflicted sight." To Mr. Dale he writes, "I am afraid there is too much of glorying in man."

And again,—"With unutterable astonishment, at the honours which are now heaped upon me, I blush over them, —and that, from a conviction of their excess over all I desire or deserve; and am truly ashamed to receive them."

In a conversation with the Rev. J. B. Marsden, "I have been looking," said this laborious and honoured servant, on the threshold of rest, "upon my personal life, my ministerial life, and upon my books, to see if I could find one bright spot. I can find none. Such a mixture of motives running through them all." And, when affectionately reminded by Mr. Marsden of his great usefulness, there followed a burst of humble thanksgiving and praise.

His first visit to me, in 1846, presented him as deeply anxious for the spiritual welfare of his flock. It was in keeping with his anxieties at an earlier date, as exhibited in the letters to his congregation and his deacons, bearing date 1840, and not opened until after his death. Before he left me he touched upon one advantage in the Church of England, in associating curates with us, and expressed a wish that he could make some such provision, but with the

view that his associate should succeed him. He evidently dreaded a division in the choice of a successor. We should be candid and lenient with one another; for our systems all show their weak points in turn. Congregations in the Church of England wince, and not unreasonably, when an unfit and unacceptable pastor is thrust on them by the nepotism of a selfish and unscrupulous patron, or as the result of jobbery; or,—worse than all—the result of the hateful system of the sale of livings, that burning scandal in our church—as the purchaser of the fleece. But popular election has its evils; and these, by no means, inconsiderable. I confess that it seemed to me, at the time, that Mr. James was unduly anxious; and that a stronger faith in the Church's Head would have calmed his fears. How wisely, how lovingly, how nobly, he ultimately acted in this matter, is told by the pen of him who was most deeply interested, and who, in his affectionate record of this period of Carr's Lane history, has shown a becoming and grateful appreciation of Mr. James's conduct.

I shall attempt no analysis of his character. Nor does it need it. He was a transparent, honest man—straightforward in aim and conduct. He was shrewd, but no manœuvrer. There was nothing of the Jesuit in him. I am but giving a sketch, not a miniature—still less a photograph.

A remark was once made to me, in reference to an eminent clergyman, that he was "an unbruised man"—a man who had not hitherto been softened down by Divine chastening. Such men, specially as Christ's ministers, however zealous and useful, will always present, in one direction of their pastorate, ministerial deficiency. Unbruised men have not fully graduated as pastors. Ministers have need themselves to be taught and sustained in the school of affliction. There are lessons to be learned only in sick chambers, and by beds of death, and in houses of mourn-

ing—not in the homes of others, but in our own. These Mr. James had learned. *He* was *not* an unbruised man. I must not, in a public lecture, rudely violate the sanctities of home life. Bereavement, great nervous depression, and morbid fears were his trials. Hence, as it appeared to me, he was safe and valuable in counsel. He was not over-sanguine. He saw difficulties. And, in his apprehensions about the prospects of the Church—specially as to the degree in which the Rationalistic leprosy was leavening the ministry—he was thought by many of his brethren to take a morbid view. It is touching to read the description of his trials, in this respect, given by his own pen. Speaking, in 1845, of a public engagement which he had made, he writes: "Nor will my nerves be tranquil again till the engagement is either dissolved or fulfilled. There will be a month's discomfort and interrupted pursuits, as the consequence of one trifling engagement. . . . . I find it difficult to explain the idiosyncrasy under which I labour. It is something like this: I make a promise to preach—after a while I am somewhat poorly—I wake in the night; the promise comes up like a spectre before me—it is a trifling concern; no matter, it *is* a concern, it is future—I cannot sleep. I rise uncomfortable, and continue so through the day. I go to bed dreading that I shall not sleep. The prediction verifies itself. . . . . Where others would find that which they would never think about for a moment till the time comes, I find that which darkens every moment till it is past." Mr. Dale states that "during the last twenty years of his life, his conviction that it was possible he might be overshadowed at any moment, by the awful presence of death and eternity, filled his heart with awe and fear."—(p. 516.)

But in his latest years there was much of peace and rest; and in the manner of his death, his gracious God was better

to him than all his fears. And when the long-looked-for summons came, and he passed into the world of spirits, without pain or fear or struggle, he left behind him a weeping flock and a sorrowing community on earth; but how many a meeting awaited him with once anxious inquirers, many of whom had never seen his face, but to whom God had blessed his pen! How many a meeting with the spirits of saints in light, whom by his voice God had called to Christ, and through Christ to glory!

In much mercy, the Master he so ardently loved, and so long and faithfully served, saved him the distress of a very prolonged and intimate acquaintance with the weakness and infirmities of old age; but it was very touching, and at the same time very instructive to those constantly with him, to witness the sweet submission, the unmurmuring acquiescence with which, in consequence of the inroads of disease and the feebleness of age, one active habit after another was relinquished; and the man who for many years walked from five to six miles a day with ease and enjoyment—and this often after *standing* at his desk writing for some hours—contented himself with a quiet stroll in the neighbourhood of his residence; then gave up walking, and only had gentle drives in his own easy carriage, which, in their turn, were becoming too painful and too fatiguing.

If I address, to-night, an advocate of extreme Church principles, let me say to him, in no spirit of upbraiding or of strife: Read, brother Churchman, and ponder God's own endorsement of the ministry of John Angell James. He worshipped not with us; his church polity was Independency. No earthly bishop's hands set him apart for his ministry; but can we doubt his commission? Can we unchurch one of our Lord's most honoured servants? Retain, if you will, the most rigid view of the apostolical succession of your own church. Doubt not that to which our church

pledges us,—the threefold ministry, bishops, priests, and deacons. But beware of a theory so exclusive as that you fail to read Christ's own endorsement. He preached Christ and loved Christ for well-nigh sixty years, among the people of Birmingham. They took knowledge of him that he loved Christ and walked with God, and was "a man full of the Holy Ghost and of faith." He loved all who loved his Master, and shed upon the waves of our angry controversies the oil of heavenly charity. He has spoken, and shall yet speak, to myriads by his gifted and honoured pen. Oh, brother, beware of a theory of apostolical succession, or a system of Church principles, which shall shut out from Christ's ministry and Christ's Church a man upon whom the Church's Head had thus stamped His seal. I disparage not, ungratefully or disloyally, my own orders. I never surrendered my episcopacy to my love for Mr. James. But here, surely, was a man called of God, a man ordained by the great Bishop of Souls. He wore no mitre upon earth : an archbishop might covet his crown in the great day.

In closing, I single out one of the highest and most exemplary excellencies of his character,—one in which, as I knew him, he was a pattern to us all,—his catholicity and charity. Here and there, indeed, was a stiff Dissenter to be found, for whom the Mr. James I knew was somewhat wanting in stiffness. Not that he was suspected of any wavering in principle ; but he leaned a little too much, it was thought, by here and there a very stiff Dissenter, to the State Church, or at any rate to some of its clergy. His own son (to his honour I record it) has not scrupled to assure us that "for a great part of his life he was compelled to seek congenial minds among the clergy of the Establishment resident in this town ; and he found such among them, and often said they were his true brethren, and the men he fraternized most with." (p. 603.) What a comment is this upon the identity of

the inner life in Christ, which is shared by all Christ's people, and which underlies all varieties of polity and the many questions which outwardly divide us! Here is the true, Divine, imperishable principle of union and fellowship. How should this raise us above the pettinesses of mere sectarianism, and allay the bitternesses even of needful strife! At the time of the movement in the town for building ten churches, he was dwelling in his exposition on justification by faith, and then said, with great solemnity: "If, after my decease, another Gospel than that preached by St. Paul should be introduced into this pulpit, I hope these pews will be empty, and that you will be found in some of the churches about to be built in the town." And it was in reference to a Church of England sanctuary that he once said from the pulpit, with great feeling: "I never pass that church, and listen to the sweet music of its bells, but I bless God for the still sweeter music from the pulpit, which floats over that great congregation from the lips of that man of God."

I have treasured, and often quoted, his golden saying, when we worked together for the relief of the Famine in Ireland and Scotland: "There is no sectarianism in misery: there should be none in mercy."

Listen to his noble testimony to some of our body—a testimony as honourable to himself as to them:—

"The day is, happily, gone by when the taunt of fox-hunting, play-going, ball-frequenting parsons could be, with justice, thrown at the clergy of the State-Church; they are now no longer to be found in those scenes of folly and vanity, but at the bed-side of the sick man, or in the cottage of the poor one.

"We must rejoice in their labours and in their success, except when their object and their aim are to crush Dissenters.

"There are very many among them of the *true* apostolic

succession in doctrine, spirit, and devotedness: many whose piety and zeal we should do well to emulate; many with whom it is among the felicities of my life to be united in the bonds of private friendship and public co-operation. Sincerely and cordially attached to their Church, they are labouring, in season and out of season, to promote its interests. Who can blame them? Instead of this, let us imitate them. For zeal and devotedness, they are worthy of it. I know their labours, and am astonished at them. Think of a clergyman—and multitudes of such there are—who, besides his other labours, spends four or five hours every day in going from house to house, visiting the sick, instructing the ignorant, comforting the distressed. Can we wonder that such men should lay hold on the public mind? Is it not in the natural course of things that it should be so? It is admitted that the clergyman of a parish has advantages for this species of ministerial occupation which we have not. He considers all the people within certain topographical limits as belonging to him—as being, in fact, his cure. While, on the other hand, most, if not all, of these persons, except such as by profession really belong to other denominations, look upon him in the light of their minister. This ever active assiduity, in addition to the Sabbath-day exercises, is admonitory to us. Can we see this new sight, the whole Church-establishment, from the Archbishop of Canterbury down to the curate of the smallest village, with all their modern and comprehensive agency of Pastoral Aid Societies, Ladies' District Visiting Societies, Scripture Readers, Church of England Tract Societies, and other means of influence and power, in busy commotion, dotting the land all over with churches and schools; and thus, by all these efforts, labouring to occupy so entirely the nation, as to leave no room for, and to prove there is no need of, any other body of Christians—can we

see all this constantly before our eyes, and not see the need of an earnest ministry, not only to maintain our ground, but to advance ?"—(" Earnest Ministry," p. 251.)

I have sometimes been told that I knew him at his best, and that, as a young minister, his feelings and course of action towards the Church of England were very different. This may be true. But it is also true that the feelings and course of action on the part of Churchmen were very different. These were the days in which a predecessor of my own, when the complaint was made to him—" Sir, they say, you have refused to bury a Dissenter,"—replied, " No, no ; quite a mistake ; I shall be happy to bury them all !" The change that had come over him is best expressed in words of which he was fond, " I have surrendered many of my prejudices, but none of my principles." I wish that all Churchmen, lay and clerics, and that all Dissenters, pastors, deacons, and worshippers, could say the same, when the fierce and flashing fires of early zeal have been softened into the steadier and purer flame of Christian charity, and principle has been purged from its alloy of bigotry. It was just in this that I found an element of character which attracted my affection and veneration. There was so much, even at his first visit to me, of what I must emphatically call *mellowness*. He struck me, at once and to the end, as a man in whose spiritual and ecclesiastical balances, essentials and secondary truths had, to a great extent, attained their just proportions and relations. A Dissenter—staunch and to the backbone. Not that he had an overweening and unqualified confidence that Independency in its exact form, at present, was *the* polity of the New Testament. He would have infused a squeeze or two of Presbyterianism into his ideal of a Church. But, as in close and constant communion with God, and in the active service of his Master, the Spirit of God developed and ripened his inner life, and as he

neared eternity, he discerned, more and more distinctly, the difference between fundamentals and non-fundamentals; between justification by faith and Church polity; between love to Christ and Episcopacy; between the question of a State Church and the churchmanship of the Church Catholic,—the churchmanship of life in Christ, through the Spirit; the churchmanship of eternity. His charity was not the charity of compromise—of an undue disparagement of the points which divide. Of such platform charity, so often brought out for an airing at our meetings (generally, in London, in the month of May), apologized for with an elaborateness which bespeaks its professor ill at ease in wearing the heavenly garb, and blazoned forth with a suspicious ostentation, many of us are heartily sick and tired. We must not sacrifice truth upon the altar of charity.

Such was *not* the charity of John Angell James. And we need this lesson and grace to practise it. It is idle to shut our eyes to the fact that questions are now agitating the public mind—the religious public mind—of England, and that issue will be joined on them, in which Churchmen and Dissenters will be arrayed against each other. Witness, every session, the Notice Book of the House of Commons. Within the pale of the Church of England herself, extremes are meeting. Extreme High Churchmen are longing to be freed from Erastian bonds. Broad Churchmen are making signs in the same direction, longing for deliverance from subscriptions and tests, if not from creeds. For the Evangelicals I will not presume to answer—save for one only, who has not a moment's hesitation in affirming that, if we must face the alternative of denationalizing the Church of England, or of nationalizing her by a comprehensiveness, which shall include in its sweep half the heresies under heaven, he would prefer the exclusiveness of truth to a comprehensiveness comprehending truth only by accident

and side by side with deadly errors—a comprehensiveness which will ultimately in England, as in Zurich and among some of the pastors of Holland, comprehend anything and everything but Christ.

But such controversies—the first and foremost of them, the very question of an Establishment—are not in themselves and necessarily scandals by which our common Christianity is dishonoured. Thoughtful men will work out such problems. Conscientious men will reach divergent and antagonistic conclusions.

But the scandal lies in wrath and bitterness and clamour; in hard names; in imputations of dishonesty; in fighting such battles with weapons neither tempered in the fires nor shaped on the forges of Charity, nor drawn from the armoury of God; and in invoking fire from heaven, not to illuminate us in the strife of truth, but to consume our adversaries. "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of." As to direct co-operation, in the working of mixed societies, we may fairly differ.

But of this I am persuaded, with an intensity of conviction which can never be weakened, that the JOHN ANGELL JAMES whom it was my happiness to know and to call my friend, and whose name will be a household word to the children and children's children of many who now hear me, and a foremost name in the muster-roll of Birmingham's worthiest worthies, were he yet with us to take part in the coming struggles, would do so, not with the one-sidedness of a blind or purblind bigot, nor with the fierceness of an unsanctified zealot, nor with a thirst for internecine strife, but in the remembrance, never more needed than in such conflicts—"The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God."

Italy and France,

WITH REFERENCE TO THEIR PRESENT RELIGIOUS CONDITION.

—

A LECTURE

BY

THE REV. RICHARD BURGESS, B.D.

ITALY AND FRANCE.

I CAN conceive the disappointment which must have pervaded this meeting, when it was announced by your Secretary, that for reasons which silence every feeling but grief, you were to be deprived of a lecture, which, I feel sure, would have been heard with peculiar interest. But, in a sudden emergency like that which rose before your Committee, it was not possible to find a substitute for the unavoidably absent lecturer, who could take up his proposed subject. My excellent friend and brother, the Rev. Mr. Oakley, now lying on his sick bed within a few paces from this Hall, had given to the lecture he proposed to deliver this evening the title of "An Autumn in Syria;" but I have never been so far East. I could have taken you to Greece and the Archipelago, to the Isle of Patmos and the Seven Churches, but not so far as Syria. But if I felt myself unequal to the task of improvising "An Autumn in Syria," it occurred to me that, perhaps, *An Autumn in Italy* might not be a bad substitute. I could say three autumns, because I have been three autumns in Italy within the last six years. But, fearing lest that should not be sufficiently ample, I propose to add on, by way of supplement, France;

so that if I have not matter enough for Italy, I may take you a little into that country, and show you what its present religious condition is, and what a mess they are all in there with the Pope's encyclical letter.

But, first, of Italy. If I had to treat the subject of Italy *in extenso*, I should have to speak of its old renown, of its long servitude to other nations, and its unavailing struggles, through many ages, to gain a little liberty; but I must touch these matters of history very lightly.

As to the renown of Ancient Italy, it scarcely will bear upon the subject that I am to introduce. Perhaps all that I could say upon its ancient renown has been said by one of our own poets—

> * * * A land
> Which was the mightiest in its old command;
> And is the loveliest, and must ever be
> The master-mould of Nature's heavenly hand,
> Wherein were cast the heroic and the free,
> The beautiful, the brave, the lords of earth and sea."

But I must come nearer to our own times, and not attempt to enter into the early history of that country—a history which few can read without being affected to tears at the "mighty wrongs" which oppressed Italy has endured for many generations; her very acts of heroism serving but to rivet her chains,—"O Vincitrice! o vinta sempre serva!" (conquering or conquered, always a slave). But the day of emancipation has come at last, and we can now tell the story of the rise and progress of liberty in Italy.

Victor Emanuel I. was, by the treaty of Vienna in 1815, restored to his kingdom of Sardinia. Six years after that, he abdicated, and was succeeded by his brother, Charles Felix. It was under the reign of that stupid monarch that I first saw Turin forty-one years ago. At that time, there was not a more wretched government in Italy. The very

word "liberty" was proscribed. The tragedies of Alfieri (the Shakspeare of Italy,) were strictly forbidden, lest a word or a sentiment breathing freedom of thought should excite the audience. Processions of monks and friars filled the streets; and, when the dirges and drawling chaunts had ceased, the noise of drums and trumpets, and the clattering of horses' hoofs, took up the story of the two-fold despotism. Where kingcraft left off, priestcraft began; and so in rotation. A book was a rarity, except in the library of the king. A Bible or a New Testament found in a traveller's bag was confiscated without appeal, and, in order that there might be no temptation to touch the forbidden fruit, the very index of prohibited books, published by the Pope for the safety of all good Catholics, was itself a prohibited book in Sardinia, lest the people should see what books were prohibited, and so find the stolen waters sweet. No more melancholy scene was to be witnessed in those days than the streets and arcades of Turin. In a city of 100,000 inhabitants, you scarcely would have counted twenty persons in the public piazza; the heavy duties imposed upon foreign goods amounted to a prohibition; the interior trade amounted to nothing; the agricultural interest was overlaid with heavy taxes: the Court spent in luxury and amusement half the revenue, and an Egyptian bondage weighed down the spirits of a would-be energetic and industrious people.

Charles Felix died, and was buried. He was succeeded by Charles Albert, the father of the present King. His title to the throne of Sardinia was at one time disallowed by Russia, and opposed by Austria. Prince Carignano was a liberal in politics, and had placed himself at the head of the revolution in 1821. He purchased his reconciliation in a way which I shall not attempt to describe; but he gave no signs of his intention to give the people a constitution until his conflict with Austria in 1847; and it was in his defeat on

the Mincio and the Po, that he left the noble legacy of the Statuto, or Constitution, to his country: he left the government that of a constitutional monarchy, which his son, the present King, has so faithfully adhered to. I would say that King Victor Emanuel is the only sovereign in Europe I know of,—I mean on the continent of Europe—that has kept his word. The year 1848, in that earthquake which shook the thrones on the Continent, first saw the dawn of freedom in Italy. The morning star of liberty shone on the Mediterranean shores, from Nice to the Gulf of Spezzia. A nation awoke as with a start. Turin became the refuge of the patriot, and the asylum of the forced or voluntary exile. Ten thousand immigrants, the flower of Italian chivalry and intelligence, filled the streets and public places of the capital of Piedmont. I had an opportunity of comparing the bright aspect of Turin in 1848, with its melancholy condition as already described in 1822. The lugubrious trains of monks and friars had disappeared, and patriots from all the despotic cities of the Peninsula greeted one another in the Piazza Castello, or the Strada del Po. The city wore "a brightness in her eye," as if she were free. Many of these immigrants were men of the highest rank, and brought with them to the country where they could breathe and speak freely, all their moveable property. The Milanese nobles had left their palaces for the Austrians to confiscate: some were turned into barracks; and others, like a plaster for a sore, were converted into hospitals. But the banner of freedom, though still streaming against the wind, had more attractions for those patriotic nobles than all their earthly possessions. The liberal professors had escaped, or were driven from the universities; authors, who had written in favour of constitutional government, were glad to find themselves under the shadow of the Constitution of Sardinia. Gioberti, who traced all the ills of Italy to the Jesuits, and

whose statue now stands in the Piazza Castello a conspicuous object, was amongst the refugees. Tommaseo, whose pen traced the picture of the degradation of the Italian clergy in his book called "Rome and the World;" Manin, the heroic defender of Venice, all met under those arcades now crowded with the *élite* of Italy; and, to complete the wonder, the Waldenses had dared to step out of their Alpine retreats, and to meet for worship in a temporary erection in a court-yard, where I first heard the sound of prayer and praise in Italy, in a "language understanded of the people." I write not a history, but only sketches for the sake of illustrating the present times.

I pass over the first ten years of liberty in Italy. A new page opened to it in 1858-9. Ducal thrones and papal fald-stools came toppling down; and in 1859 I went again, and saw two reigning Dukes, a Duchess, and a Pope, who had come to grief, and six millions more Italians had come to joy. The animated scenes in the public squares at Florence and Turin, and other cities, told even to passing travellers how Central Italy also had risen to political life. I took a glance at Venice, "where Tasso's echoes are no more," and where every bridge is now a "bridge of sighs." At that time the Austrian trampled in the Piazza del Marco, as he does still, and the King of Naples then listened to the clanking of chains in the dungeons of Nisida. I went again in September, 1860, and lo! he was gone; but I found him at Rome on one of the Seven Hills. Now let us look how the light is peering through the chinks which religious liberty has rent in "the chambers of imagery" after 1000 years. Before the Act of emancipation in 1848, the Waldenses had only twenty-one pastors; and now, there are thirty-nine in the valleys and in places around them. At Pignerol, where the Romish Bishop used to be the Pope's executioner for the Christians of the neighbouring valleys, a church has been

built. They have a minister there, with a congregation of 150, a schoolmaster, a day-school, and a Sunday-school, and a side station ten miles off, at Vigon. Turin is the oldest station of a missionary character which the Waldensian Church has founded. It is now eighteen years old—a fine church, with its pastor, four school teachers, Scripture readers, and a district formed into a parish called the sixteenth parish of Turin—acknowledged as such by the Government. A parish means that the registration of births, baptisms, marriages, and funerals, are legal and valid as those in Roman Catholic parishes are. In several other towns in Piedmont there are little circles of Christians. A chain of evangelical groups of Christian converts runs from Courmayeur, at the foot of the Little St. Bernard, down to the Valley of Aoste; and in the town of Aoste itself, upon which travellers descend from the Great St. Bernard, a memorial of persecution has been turned into a monument of religious liberty. It is an anecdote of the great French reformer which I think is not well known. Calvin's indefatigable zeal impelled him to cross the snowy Alps to introduce the gospel into Italy. Arriving safe at the Cité D'Aoste, he planted his standard in that ancient Roman town, and dwelt for a short time in his own hired house; but, at last, he must needs escape for his life. His adventures in getting back over the Alps are exceedingly interesting. There was no Zoar, but he could flee to the mountains: and his adventures, before he finally got clear of his pursuers, would form a story of romantic interest; but the inhabitants of Aoste, especially the priests, rejoiced at the good riddance of the arch-heretic, and perpetuated the memory of his flight by erecting a column opposite the house where Calvin resided. The column still remained, but not conspicuous; so that our friends, the Waldensians, did not perceive, until their house of prayer was filled with converts, that they had opened the

well-spring of the word of life directly opposite the column commemorative of Romish persecutions three hundred years ago. Now the monument of religious liberty stands in its place, as a memorial of the great Reformer. At Genoa, the ancient people of the valleys have erected a church of imposing magnitude, with schools and residences for the ministers. At Nice, the Waldenses have a commodious church and an able pastor. Florence forms their missionary centre for Tuscany. At Leghorn, the cause of the gospel has triumphed over all the opposition of priests and ill-disposed magistrates; and an agent of the Vaudois Church has even found his way to Orbitelles,—the central point of the mission work among the navvies, who are fast invading the patrimony of St. Peter, as the line approaches Civita Vecchia. But, besides these missions of the Waldenses, there are congregations in many towns of Piedmont and Lombardy, far more numerous; collected and brought together by the agency of the independent Evangelical bodies, composed entirely of converted Roman Catholics. Florence may be considered the centre of the mission of these independent efforts.

This great uprising of the nation which had been trodden down for centuries has awakened the sympathies of half of Europe, and the whole of England. Statesmen and politicians naturally look to civil liberty, and desire to see the Constitution firmly rooted before the subject of religion is touched. The believer in God's Word, equally valuing the blessings of civil liberty, considers it to have no roots except in the genial soil of a Scriptural Christianity. He cannot, therefore, wait until secular institutions are organised; but, as soon as the Constitution and charter is read, he begins to unroll the more important charter of Christian liberty. The successive administrations of Victor Emanuel have recognised the rights of conscience; and when appealed to,

have defended those rights against the invasion of priests and the local magistrates, who are under their influence. No Minister of State has shown more firmness in this respect than Baron Ricasoli, who, upon principle, supports the doctrine of religious equality. It must not, however, be supposed that the ruling powers in free Italy encourage the efforts of Reformed Christians, either natives or foreigners, to disturb or interfere with the religion of the majority. They consider the whole subject as an embarrassment to their policy, which is rather to gain the favour than to alienate the minds of the Romish hierarchy. Count Cavour, though always ready to listen to complaints from the oppressed minority, felt the annoyance of the religious question; and had rather the Vaudois had kept in their ancestral valleys, than carried their theology to Florence. It is well, therefore, for the friends of Italian Evangelization to remember that their presence is tolerated rather than encouraged by the civil power, and viewed with perfect hatred by the ecclesiastical authorities. If there is any mitigation of this feeling, it is in Florence, and in certain parts of Tuscany. Even before the Revolution of 1848, it might have been said of the Tuscans, that they were more noble than those of Liguria, for they searched the Scriptures to see whether these things were so. "There is a river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God;" and, every heart in which Christ's love dwells will pray that those refreshing streams may at length be turned upon the cities and plains of Italy—instead of the polluted streams of an idolatrous religion which, like burning lava, have produced a moral devastation among twenty generations—and that Italy may, at length, contribute tens of thousands to swell the ranks of Him, "of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named," and be able to comprehend with all saints what is the

length and breadth, and depth and height, and to know the love of God, which passeth knowledge.

Having mentioned Baron Ricasoli, I cannot resist the pleasure of bringing to your notice a letter of his, which he sent in answer to an address signed by the President of the Synod, and Pastor of the Waldensian Church at Turin. It was in May, 1861. I omit the address, and confine myself to the answer, because it is important to know that we have a man in Italy not unlikely again to be at the head of the administration, who reads his Bible daily, and can give utterance to sentiments like these :—

"The congratulations and good wishes which the Synod of the Waldensian Church, before the termination of its sitting, addressed to His Majesty Victor Emanuel, King of Italy, to the Parliament of the Nation, and to the King's Ministers, gave pleasure to all parties; the prayer that proceeds from a lowly and contrite heart, and a heart thoroughly impressed with its faith, cannot but ascend with acceptance to the Almighty. Therefore, it is a satisfaction to have your prayer, that the great work of the regeneration of Italy, begun in the name of freedom, and strengthened by the union of sentiments, may finally be brought to its accomplishment with liberty and concord. I am happy to be living at a period in which a diversity in religious creed no longer renders men's minds hostile to one another; but each, respecting the sanctuary of another's conscience, gives a helping hand to his neighbour in things just, useful, and holy. I feel that I do not merit all that your benevolence prompts you to say of me; but this I declare, that liberty of conscience will be maintained by me equally with all other kinds of liberty, and, whenever there is occasion, will be, by me, protected. I consider religious liberty as one of the greatest results of modern civil progress, and moreover, as

the very thing which, more than any arguments, is able to cause religious dissensions to cease, and to restore the unity of the Church, so much to be desired.

"Accept, Rev. Sir, the expression of my most distinguished consideration. "RICASOLI."

Baron Ricasoli has been true to the principles expressed in this letter. He protected the Waldensian pastor at Leghorn, when the local magistrates would have driven him away with ignominy. He has on several occasions rebuked the intolerant spirit of subordinate officials, often too ready to do the bidding of the priests, who, if they had at their command the secular arm which the recent Encyclical Letter demands, would soon silence the voice of every pastor and evangelist in Italy.

What then, it will be naturally asked, are our hopes of Italy? Liberty of conscience, and liberty of worship, are now proclaimed from the Alps to the Straits of Messina; but Pope Gregory XVI., and after him, Pope Pius IX., have pronounced *ex cathedrâ*, that liberty of conscience is a *delirium*, and liberty of the press and of speech the mother of all heresies. Are not these insurmountable obstacles to the carrying out of what liberty of conscience intends? Doubtless, wherever a great and effectual door is open, there are always many adversaries; but the hopes of Italy, of completing her emancipation, consist in the recovery of those liberties which are now placed beyond the control of the Romish hierarchy.

First of all, the *liberty of the press*, which affords facilities for the distribution of tracts and other publications—not only tracts that are sent from England, but tracts written on the spot—the publication of which the liberal grants from the Religious Tract Society go a long way to effect, as well as to promote their circulation. The specimens I have before me are

all in Italian. It will be enough to translate the titles only, to understand the present tendency of the Italian mind :—

Predictions of the Vatican Preachers upon the Final Catastrophe of the Church of Rome. Printed at Perugia!

Who has Falsified the Bible—the Protestants or the Roman Catholics? An amicable discussion. Printed at Turin.

Roman Infallibility. By T. R. Printed at Naples.

A Letter to Pius IX., Bishop of Rome. By L. De Sanctis.

The Worship of the Saints Tried by Holy Scripture, History, and Reason. By P. Leorati. Naples, 1861.

A Comedy Among the Dead, or the Bull Unigenitus. By the same Author. Naples, 1861.*

What is the Mass? An Appeal to the Reason and Conscience of the Italians. By the same Author.

One specimen of the style adopted by some of these Italian writers may not be unacceptable. The "Appeal" begins thus: "Italians,—The Roman Catholic worship is all comprehended in the mass. People go to mass, they hear masses, they cause masses to be celebrated, they have masses sung for the living and the dead, and yet if I were to ask of the great majority of you, 'What is the Mass?' you would probably answer me,—'Why! the mass is the mass; we do not know more about it than that; but we attend it because it is the foundation of our worship.'" The author then proceeds to discuss his subject.

Tracts and other publications are also written by the Waldensian pastors, and printed at Florence. The two

* This is an exceedingly clever pamphlet. The ghosts of the Fathers are brought into conference with Pope Clement XI., and are made to maintain the 101 propositions of Quesnel, against which the Bull Unigenitus was launched. The fathers treat the Pope with little deference, and reprove him for disturbing them.

following are by Paul Geymonat, Professor of Evangelical Theology in the College at Florence :—

The Church or the Gospel.
The Priesthood and the Ministry.

These are but a few of the numerous tracts which are now in circulation in every part of Italy, penetrating even the forbidden territory still hanging by Rome.

But, besides these smaller publications in the form of tracts, there is a diffusion of sacred literature which is new to the Italians. Among the translations now circulated in Italy very widely, is that of "D'Aubigné's Reformation," also the "Commentary of Robert Haldane on the Epistle to the Romans," "The Pilgrim's Progress," (which is read most extensively; the Italians are delighted with it—it suits their imaginative minds), "McCrie's History of the Reformation," "Luther on the Colossians," "Leighton on St. Peter," "The Shorter Catechism," "Letters of John Newton," "Follow Jesus," by Newman Hall, "The Life of Havelock," "The Loss of the Kent," and that beautiful book of Adolphe Monod, called "Lucilla." Besides these, there are the original works of De Sanctis, especially the Almanack called "The Household Friend," now circulated to the extent of 80,000 copies purchased by the Italians, and eagerly read; and I am told that next year it will be necessary to increase the edition to 100,000, to supply the demand. These are good signs that Italy will become more and more enlightened if the press continues to be free.

But our hopes for the future of Italy are not built upon a wide circulation of religious tracts and sacred literature, so much as upon a wide diffusion of the Holy Scriptures; and it is no little satisfaction to know, that in the land, where, a few years ago, the Bible was proscribed from the Alps to the Gulf of Tarentum, it has now a free circulation, and can be

publicly sold in every town of the peninsula, always excepting the patrimony of St. Peter. Thousands and tens of thousands of Italians now possess that sharp two-edged sword before which vain traditions fly, and Rome's hopes expire. Again our hopes for Italy centre in the measures now taken for promoting the education of the people. The Italian Government voted last year 17,000,000 francs, £640,000, for public education. That is within £100,000 of our famous Parliamentary grant. That great national effort shows the earnest desire that the Italians have to educate the people. I need not tell you that the education of the people in Italy has been deplorable. In the kingdom of Naples it has been ascertained that not one in a hundred could read a letter of a book; but the progress they have made in a few years is remarkable. The Government is establishing schools in every part of the kingdom, and, I am happy to say, they are introducing into the elementary schools portions of the Scriptures. Two of their eminent men have been officially sent to London to study the modes of education in our own country, and one of them returned with a good selection of our school-books, to serve as models for the use of the schools which are, and will be established. But still greater hopes for the future are derived from the work of evangelization. The Waldensian Synod commits this home missionary work to a special committee, whose duty it is to make an annual report. The last report, 1864, is in my possession. It would be sufficient to enumerate the towns where the word is preached to see how the Israel of the Alps are proceeding to take possession of Italy. Beginning from the South, they have already caused the gospel to be proclaimed at Palermo, and have two evangelists labouring in this field, once so unpromising. Naples offers an illustration of that Divine saying: "many that are ast shall be first." I have had the satisfaction of visiting Naples, and of conferring with those excellent men who direct the work

of evangelization in that city. Placards were to be seen in every street, announcing where meetings for expounding the Word of God were to be held. I would not have been the man to have been seen posting up such placards five years ago. I should either have been thrown into the dungeon of Nisida, or immured in the dark Castello Nuovo, the terrific Bastille of Bourbon cruelty. A statistical table of the Evangelical Italian schools of Naples, lately circulated, exhibits them as twelve in number, containing in all, 453 children. These are all Protestant schools, where the Bible is read and taught. In two or three instances, converted priests, who have voluntarily sacrificed their position in the Church of Rome, are willing and glad to be teachers for a piece of bread. The managers of those schools, all men well-known for their piety, remark: "As to those who have any doubt about these encouraging facts which we point out, we say to them, Come and see; visit our oldest school for boys (No. 222, Via Cavone), which reckons more than 100 scholars—examine these children in writing and arithmetic, but, above all, in their religion; pass on, then, to the upper class of boys, and then to our girls' school at Magno Cavallo, which has not yet been established six months . . . . you will go away convinced that it is the pure source of the Word of God that we teach the children to draw from." I have been there, and I have examined those children on more than one occasion; and I can say that, in the course of a few months, it is wonderful what these children have acquired.

And, now, with regard to the prospects of Rome. The very attitude of Rome gives hope for Italy. To traverse the peninsula of Italy ten or fifteen years ago, was to pass through the dominions of nine potentates, all seated on their thrones. They are now reduced to two, the Roman and

Pontiff. Pius IX. takes his last hold of temporal dominion. It is not generally known what the residue of that dominion is which is left to the successor of St. Peter. The whole population of the Pope's dominions is about a fifth part of London—between five and six hundred thousand souls; here is a sketch of the territory: Picture to yourselves the blue Mediterranean, as it extends along its Italian shores from a place called Montalto, on the borders of the ancient Tuscany, up to Terracina, at the southern extremity of the Pontine Marshes, a distance of 120 Italian miles,—and you have the Pope's coast. As you glide along in the steam-vessel over that blue liquid plain, and look upon those shores, you will scarcely see a habitation or a living being until you come to Civita Vecchia, which is the Pope's only port; and, resuming the voyage southward, the same dreary aspect meets the eye, until the rocks of old Anxur relieve the prospect. The frontier town of the Papal States, on entering them from Tuscany, is still Aquapendente, garrisoned by the French troops, whose headquarters are at St. Lorenzo: from thence we have a view of the beautiful lake of Bolsena, which is still included in the Pope's dominions. A little to the East of Viterbo, which may be considered the second city in the Roman States, is the Ponte Felice, over the Tiber, near Melagnano; here the celebrated river is but a stream, and divides the province of Umbria from the old Sabine territory: the former is now wholly annexed to the kingdom of Italy, with its capital Perugia, so that the Papal frontier is here brought within fifty miles of Rome. The eastern frontier of the Roman territory skirts the further Abruzzi, and comprises the frontier towns of Rieti, Subiaco, Frosinone, and Alatri; and turning southward ends at Terracina, the entrance into the Papal territory by the Pontine Marshes. The width of those ecclesiastical states, or reduced patrimony of St. Peter, is

between fifty and sixty miles, taken from the mouth of the Tiber, across to the old Neapolitan frontier. The present Roman States, for the purposes of administration, are divided into four provinces, called Delegations: these are, Civita Vecchia, Viterbo, Frosinone, and the central Province, which comprises Rome and the Castelli. In this territory of between 7,000 and 8,000 square miles, a large portion may be said to be almost unpeopled; but, taking the whole population at 600,000, we shall have little more than eighty inhabitants to a square mile: 200,000 of them are concentrated at Rome and the environs; the rest are, for the most part, poor and helpless, depending upon alms or charitable institutions. The whole revenues are unequal to support the dignity of the Sovereign Pontiff and his College of Cardinals. It is a temporal dominion which is hardly worth contending for, and cannot long endure in its present form; but we will not enter into speculations: it is dangerous ground when you come to prophesy.

I may not stay any longer in Italy if I am to complete my programme, and say anything on the religious condition of France; already nearly an hour has passed of the time allotted to me, and but a little space remains for so great a subject. France, apart from political considerations, may be viewed under two aspects: first, as Papal France, and next, as Protestant France, to which may be added the great conflict now waging between infidelity of various shades and the very existence of Christianity. The strength of Popery consists in its compact organization. A string pulled at Rome moves the following puppets: 6 cardinals, 15 archbishops, 69 bishops, 158 vicars general, 660 canons, 3,396 of the higher clergy, 39,630 officiating priests, 3,000 seminarists who are preparing for the priesthood, and 50,000 persons belonging to different religious orders. The whole of this army, taken at the least, amounts to 123,131.

A word from Rome moves them all as one man—it will easily be conceived what a power this is; and, when it is considered that that immense army act upon principle, which is to obey the Pope sooner than they would obey their king, it is a formidable power for any Government to cope with. Roman Catholic Governments have more reason to be afraid of the power of the Romish hierarchy than we have in this country. It is not a little remarkable that the famous Encyclical Letter has been received with precautionary measures in all the Roman Catholic countries where it has found entrance, and has not been allowed, except partially, to be promulgated: while Great Britain is the only country where it can be circulated without let or hindrance; if the Romish bishops and priests in this country think fit to read the whole fourscore errors condemned in the Encyclical, they are perfectly free, no remonstrance from the Secretary of State will be heard. It is in France and other Roman Catholic countries where the ecclesiastical power is opposed by the Governments; in England alone, and much less in Ireland, there is no official opposition to the religion of Rome: in Great Britain its strength is weakness, but in France its power is felt in the Council chamber of the Emperor. But, although there is this great strength of Popery in France, yet Popery even there has its weakness. It has no hold now on the intelligent portions of the community. There is no one now, who considers himself above the uneducated peasant, cares what the priest thinks or says; obedience is confined to the 123,000 who, at the word given, bow the knee to Baal. It is seldom that a man, when once he has passed his first communion, ever sees the inside of a church or a priest, until he comes to be upon his death-bed, so that France is not really Roman Catholic. "You think," I once heard a Frenchman say, "we are Roman Catholics in France; we are a nation of infidels!" Yes, there is a strength

butthere is also a weakness in Popery, and whenever it comes face to face with a power that will resist its pretensions it will crumble into dust, and will look in vain for the support of the people. Such is a feeble sketch of Papal France, affecting the religious condition of 35,000,000 of human beings. But there is a France Protestant; it is estimated at 2,000,000, after making a large allowance for those who are mere Protestants in name, and deducting those who prefer "Renan's Life of Jesus" to the gospel, the influence of Evangelical Protestantism is fast becoming equal to cope with all the strength and power that Ultramontanism can bring to bear upon the French mind. the Reformed Church of France, originally organized in 1559, was reconstituted by the law of Napoleon I. in 1802. It has in many respects the same form of church government as the Established Kirk of Scotland. The Reformed Church of France has its presbyterial councils, its consistories, and, if permitted by the Government, its provincial synods. The pastors are paid out of the public treasury, at the same rate as the Roman Catholic priests. At this time there are about 1,000 pastors, of which 840 and upwards belong to the legally constituted churches, including the Lutheran. The rest belong to the free churches not salaried by the State. A majority of those pastors are faithfully preaching and adorning the doctrine of the Cross—setting forth Christ as the only Saviour. Many of them are eminent in learning, diligent in their ministry, abundant in labour, not only feeding the flock committed to their charge, but going out into the surrounding districts, to villages and hamlets, where two or three Protestant families are to be found isolated and deprived of religious comfort and instruction. Around these scattered remnants of the descendants of the old Huguenots are collected willing inquirers from the Roman Catholic population, and the pastor is petitioned to repeat his

visit and give them further instruction in the Word of God. This soon ends in an audience of from twenty to one hundred persons, and, if there be no obstruction on the part of the civil authorities, the gospel is planted once for all in that "commune." This work of evangelizing the rural districts of France belongs to those home missionary societies which the zeal of the orthodox Protestants of France and Geneva has founded and maintained. One of those evangelizing associations was formed in 1847. Its income the first year was £1,280, and in 1849 it fell to £690; in 1864 it amounted to £5,850; and during the eighteen years of the Society's existence it has collected and expended upon the propagation of the gospel in France 1,447,217 francs or £60,000. It now maintains twelve central stations, and 120 places of worship, and assists in keeping up twenty-three schools; it provides forty-nine pastors, of which four are itinerant, independent of the voluntary and occasional assistance of settled ministers, reckoning evangelists which answer to our Scripture readers, Bible women, school teachers and assistants. Their agents amount in number to eighty, all actively and fully employed. A similar society of still older date, and rather attached to the free churches, has now, in active operation upwards of sixty labourers; and for thirty years that evangelical body has caused the gospel to be preached to the Roman Catholics in half the departments of France, and can reckon up their converts from Popery to true Christianity by thousands. There are, in all, six of those Evangelical bodies in France with which British Christians may safely co-operate, and they maintain an aggregate of between 200 and 300 agents, including ordained ministers, evangelists, Bible hawkers, and school teachers. If our tourists could spare occasionally a few hours from the pursuit of pleasure, and leave the beaten track of travellers for a visit to a rural "commune," they would see

in a secluded hamlet, or village, a humble edifice slightly distinguished from an ordinary dwelling, and, upon inquiry, they would find that the unpretending building was the place where the Protestants met to hear the Word of God explained. I have been for many summers an eye-witness of those primitive assemblies. And in remote districts, where nothing has been heard by an ignorant peasantry for many generations but the drawling chaunt of an unedifying mass, the evangelist has gone down, as Philip once went to Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. This active propagation of a Scriptural Christianity in France has naturally attracted the notice of the Emperor and his Government, and aroused the indignation of bishops, priests, and religious fraternities. And for some years religious liberty in France was but a name ; but now, the influence of the Reformed faith has begun to tell upon the mind of France. It is no longer viewed as the offspring of incarnate demons like Luther and Calvin. It has found defenders among the most eminent writers, and the history of the Reformation is now read with eager curiosity by the students in the halls of the University, while all the best productions in literature now proceed from the pens of Protestant writers. This is the power which God has raised up in France to stem the torrent of Mariolatry and the superstition which Ultramontanism and the Jesuits are pouring upon the 30,000,000 of the French peasantry. The little army of the faithful soldiers of Christ, which has to sustain this great conflict, deserves the sympathy and aid of all who desire to make known God's saving health to all nations.

It remains forme to notice the internal struggle whichat this time is convulsing the Reformed Church of France, a conflict not unlike that which is now waging within the Established Church of these realms.

When French Protestantism emerged from the lurid flames

of the Revolution in the beginning of the present century, it was contaminated by Voltarianism; and the few pastors who re-appeared were incapable of instructing their flocks. In the south of France, however, the descendants of the "Church in the desert" were numerous, and in the ancient Dauphinè a good number of the old places of worship existed, but in decay; and around them grouped the scattered remnants of the old Reformed Church. In the North of France between sixty and seventy churches rose to life, and where the ravages made by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes were not complete, there was to seen before 1830 a pastor and his congregation in an old "temple," furnished with its rustic council of elders, retaining some of the old Huguenot spirit, and singing the psalms of Clement Marrot. Protestantism increased numerically during the reign of Louis Philippe; and a very different race of pastors, reared in the University of Montauban, began to minister in the consistorial churches; but the leaven of infidelity and the heresies of Socinianism were far from being purged out of the churches of the South, and even kept their hold upon the church at Paris. The grosser forms of errors were kept in the background; the congregation were frequently in advance of their pastors in an orthodox creed. In 1848, the Liberal party, which rejected all creeds as a yoke of bondage, and the Orthodox party, which admitted the great doctrines of the Reformation, were nearly balanced; as it was proved in a synod at Paris, held in 1848, where all the eighty consistorial bodies in France were represented. But after another ten years it was also proved by the result of certain elections, that the Orthodox party had risen to the ascendancy. The more advanced of the Liberal party fell into extreme Rationalism; they founded a journal to maintain and propagate their opinions, and made no secret of their unbelief in the supernatural in religion; they looked upon the founder of Christianity as a mere fallible man, denied the

inspiration of the Scriptures, threw the doctrine of Christ Crucified to the winds, and finally hailed the "Life of Jesus" by M. Renan as the forerunner of a "Great Reformation." And yet these unfaithful men insisted upon their right to occupy the pulpits of the Reformed Church of France. Then the Presbyterial Council of Paris arose and vindicated their authority, which the law gives them, and suspended from his functions of assistant pastor the editor of the "Liberal Protestant Journal." It is gratifying to add that the voice of Protestant France was in favour of the "act of discipline," which removed the bosom friend of Renan from a Christian pulpit. Several addresses from foreign churches were sent to the Presbyterial Council, congratulating them upon the faithful, though painful exercise of their judicial power; and amongst those addresses was one signed by 191 clergymen, including five bishops of the Anglican Church. But the decision of this "final Court of appeal" aroused the indignation of the free thinkers, and they filled Paris with their cry of "intolerance." A great crisis, I do not say for difference in doctrine, but for Christianity itself, is now pending. Every third year the consistories and presbyterial councils are renewed by election; these are the official bodies to which the law commits the safeguard of doctrine and discipline within their prescribed limits. The Rationalist party are putting forth their whole strength, and canvassing the several constituencies, determined to dispute every vote. The defenders of the faith appeal to the Protestantism of France, and put the question in the following antitheses:

"The choice lies—

"Between Divine revelation—and Natural religion;

"Between the supreme authority of the Word of God—and that of reason and conscience;

"Between the Bible Divinely inspired—and the Bible mixed with legends and errors;

"Between Jesus Christ the Son of God—and Jesus Christ the teacher of morality;

"Between Christ the Saviour and Redeemer—and Christ a mere example, and that not in the highest degree of human perfection!

* * * * *

"Between the Reformed Christian Church—and a humanitarian Church, Deist or Pantheist; and then they add: The Reformed Church of Paris, the Reformed Church of France, the Universal Christian Church, the Divine head of our Church and of all the Churches, the great Shepherd and Bishop of our souls, the great Captain of our Salvation are waiting for each one in eight days from hence, "to do his duty." The elections will close on January 24th.*

What then, we may ask, is to be the future religious destiny of France? The answer of all who have confidence in the power of the truth as it is in Christ, is: the future is for the gospel. An eminent historian, and now a professor in the Sorbonne in Paris, has written a book, to show from history, that France has always been religiously disposed, but that the religious sentiment has always been in the wrong direction, and that the great remedy for all the evils which afflict France is the gospel. "France," he says, "has yet to learn that there is a Saviour who issues His invitation to all creatures groaning and travailling in pain together until now, 'Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.'"

Now, my friends, I must pause, for I have already passed the time allotted to me. I have to thank you for your patient hearing of the disjointed remarks to which I have given utterance; but, as I said at the beginning, you must

* While this was passing through the press the result of the election was declared, and five out of the six elected were Orthodox; the sixth has yet to be decided.

accept me as you find me. You will see, I trust, that there is a great field open for us on the Continent, and possessing, as we do, bread enough and to spare, we ought not to withhold a portion from the 37,000,000 in France and the 22,000,000 in Italy, who, with few exceptions, are perishing with hunger; they feed upon nothing but the husks of a mass, or on some of those traditions which can never give life or comfort to a single soul. Let us study this subject. I would advise the young men of this Christian Association to take it up. They will find it exceedingly interesting—I mean the present state of the Continent both in its Protestant and Popish aspect. They can do something, if it be only by praying that God would be pleased, among other nations, to make His saving health known to Italy, no longer prostrate, and to France, uneasy under the yoke which an intolerable Ultramontanism is using all its strength and ingenuity to put upon the "Eldest Son of the Church."

Some of the Social Laws of Moses

CONSIDERED IN THEIR INFLUENCE

ON

THE CHARACTER OF THE HEBREW BOY, YOUTH, AND MAN.

A LECTURE

BY

THE REV. JOHN EDMOND, D.D

SOME OF THE SOCIAL LAWS OF MOSES.

My first word must be explanatory and somewhat apologetical. The title under which this lecture has been announced*—hurriedly chosen at first, and preferred for brevity's sake to others more exact—scarcely indicates the nature of the discourse intended. For it is not my purpose to treat politically of the Hebrew commonwealth, nor, indeed, to discuss the theme in its entire compass, even in the aspect selected. I design to look at some, and some only of the Mosaic statutes in their social bearings, and to inquire what influence these would be likely to exert on the development of character. To furnish a thread of connection for the arrangement of topics necessarily somewhat varied, I shall suppose the case of some one Israelite, instructed from childhood in the laws of his country, and yielding to them a loyal obedience; and shall endeavour to show how such a citizen would necessarily prove dutiful as a son, pure as a youth, just and obliging as a neighbour, considerate, equitable and kind as a master; in all relations an abhorrer of deceit and violence; an upright, humane and patriotic man. In the prosecution of this line of thought some topics belonging

* The civil polity of Moses.

to the general subject will be left aside or lightly touched, partly because less fitted for discussion here; partly that to embrace every point in a single lecture would be impracticable; and in part also, that in the selection of the statutes to which I make fuller reference, I have been actuated by a wish to treat not only of what abstractly and in itself is interesting, but of that also which has a bearing on questions of importance in agitation at the present day. It will be felt, I trust, as we proceed, that the examination of the statutes of Moses, to which I now invite you, is not a dry antiquarian pursuit, but one suggestive of many lessons, coming home to our hearts in our own business and relationships—and these statutes themselves not mere stern enactments thundered forth for terror and restraint among a rude and barbarous people, but embodiments of righteousness and true morality, fitted to educate the nation in the love of justice, humanity, and peace. With this explanatory preamble, I may now, I trust, be allowed to amend the title of the lecture, and to announce as the theme of this evening's consideration, not "The Civil Polity of Moses," but, Some of the Social Laws of Moses, viewed in their influence on the formation of character in the Hebrew boy, youth, and man.

Taking, as I have said, the line of an individual life, to give a sort of unity to the discussion of diversified topics, I shall suppose my Hebrew citizen to have been born in the days of Samuel the Prophet, a contemporary of David, and subject of King Saul. Some of the events of that monarch's reign will furnish occasion for the introduction of one or two topics I am desirous not to exclude. But before proceeding with this design, there are some general remarks on the whole subject which appear necessary to a distinct apprehension of the nature and range of our enquiry.

The first is this: that we must not forget the difference between magisterial law and moral precept. Law cannot

deal with all that comes within the domain of ethics; the kingdom of conscience is much wider than the rule of public statute can possibly reach. There are virtues which cannot be directly promoted, and vices which cannot be restrained by legal enactments. It would be hard, for example, to institute a tariff for amercing the looks or even the words of ireful passion—though these bear in their bosom the very seed of murder. But, besides, even in regard to overt acts of a kind unmistakeably such as to be cognizable by law, there is room for the question of expediency as to their prohibition or punishment. There may be crimes against society, clearly deserving penalty, which yet it may be unwise, in certain states of a community, to visit with penal infliction. A government cannot justly be charged with approving or conniving at vices, which it may be only too weak to repress, or which to repress would for the time produce yet greater evil. A moral law must forbid all wrong, but the statute-book of a nation may omit to ordain punishment for certain acts of injustice, without being fairly chargeable with lending them sanction, or even regarding them as of slight account. For the question in framing laws is not simply, is such an act a crime? but further, is its restraint by coercion practicable or wise? If, indeed, the law should ordain the wrong, instead of simply forbearing to forbid or punish it; if it should enjoin, instead of only allowing the evil, the defence now stated would be inadmissible. Let an example from the Mosaic code illustrate these remarks. Our Lord himself tells us that Moses, for the hardness of the hearts of the Jewish people, suffered them to put away their wives. The law of divorce, then, was not a sanction to the practice, but an allowance of it among a people too obstinate and sinful to make its forcible repression expedient. The Jews were suffered, not commanded, nor encouraged, to put away their wives for causes really insufficient to make the marriage

covenant void. The law, therefore, was not against the original constitution, the Divine rule of marriage, as it had been from the beginning. It simply permitted an evil which it was unwise to restrain by penal consequences at the hand of the magistrate.

If any one should say that even a permissive enactment in respect to moral fault does, to some extent, give occasion to the conception and commission of such fault, it should be borne in mind that the Mosaic statute-book did not originate such practices as it deals with, not by prohibition, but by limitation, regulation, and restraint. Repudiation of wives was not suggested by the law which prescribed, in cases of divorce, a formal document in writing setting forth the act and its causes. The perfunctory and capricious dismission of the weaker party in the conjugal contract existed among the heathen nations. Now, the prevalence in Israel of similar tyranny was not encouraged, but checked by the requirement of a deed of separation. What the practice might be among oriental tribes may be partly conjectured from the fact that, in civilized Athens, a husband could get quit of his wife by the simple and summary process of turning her out of doors; although the law held him bound for certain monetary arrangements. The same remark applies to other instances—to polygamy, for example, to slavery, to war itself. The evils are not instituted by the law; they are only bounded and restrained.

There is yet a third observation to be made in regard to the social laws of Moses. They were enacted in connection with a religious system which belonged to the period of the Church's nonage. Even, therefore, if it could be shown that many of them were unfit for transplantation into a commonwealth in these later days of increased knowledge and privilege, it would not follow that they were, for the time being, inapt or unwise. They must be judged rela-

tively to the stage of progress in moral and spiritual education reached by the people on whom they were imposed. In a state pervaded by Christian teaching, public opinion the common ethical sense, the very refinement of taste, may render a penal statute needless, which yet in times more ignorant was not only a salutary law, but as such prepared the way for the higher moral education which supersedes its necessity. We cling to the hope that a time will come when love will antiquate all penal laws whatever, when the golden rule will be the bond of universal society, and the occupation of the magistrate as an avenger of crime will be gone. Then will the kingdom of God have fully come; then will be the reign of heaven on earth.

But, lest any one should conclude from this that it will, therefore, be fruitless to study the old statute-book of the Hebrew commonwealth, as a thing antiquated and inapplicable to modern conditions of society, let it be further remarked, that it can hardly be without signal advantage that we contemplate God's mode of governing a human community at any stage of its moral progress. The essence of crimes does not change, though the expediency of punishing them may alter, or the necessity for dealing with them by law arise or cease. Keeping in mind the principles already indicated as needful to an enlightened judgment, we may surely expect to learn from the polity of a theocracy something of valuable application to all society. We may understand what evils in a community provoke the Divine displeasure, what comparative hatefulness attaches to different sins by their proportionate punishment; and where still expediency dictates the interference of law with any wrong, we may learn something of how to direct its warning and its blow. From a wisely-governed state, even where only human legislators have framed the code, all others may learn lessons for the guidance of their own jurisprudence,

although a mere copy of its statute-book should be impossible; how much more from a commonwealth governed directly by God himself! One is forced, by even this general consideration, to conclude that light for the solution of some of our social problems might be sought not hopelessly among the customs and laws of that ancient people who enjoyed the great distinction of having Jehovah for their King.

I must now, however, leave these general and introductory observations, and advance to my more specific design.

Now, the very first aspect in which a Hebrew child would come to deal with the law of his people would be that in which it bears on the respect and reverence and obedience due to parents. Indeed, submission and love to father and mother are the first moral requirements made of every human being. The fifth precept in the decalogue is the first commandment, not merely as the primary injunction of the second table, but as the very first authoritative claim that meets the dawning intelligence and waking conscience of the infant man. Law stretches forth its hands to embrace its new subject, first of all, in the form of parental love, claiming its legitimate response. (Ah! is not that the aspect, rightly seen, of all the Divine Father's law?) In regard to this, the Hebrew boy of a well-ordered family would, doubtless, be carefully instructed by the impression on his mind of that word of the ten spoken from Sinai, made emphatic both by its position in the table and by the annexed promise, "Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." But as he grew in acquaintance with the scriptures and laws of his people, he would have the teaching of the decalogue powerfully riveted on his mind. He would come to know that by God's will, an imprecation pronounced on father or mother was to come back and rest with shadow of doom on the son that dared to utter it; for

thus spoke the statute, "He that curseth father or mother shall surely be put to death." He would learn, too, how on taking possession of the land of Canaan, the fathers of Israel had, by Divine direction, stood in two divisions on opposing heights to pronounce blessing and curse, and that one of the maledictions pealed forth from Mount Ebal, and endorsed by the catholic amen of the people was this, "Cursed be he that setteth light by his father or his mother." Moreover, there was one special statute, which provided for the handing over to the magistrates for judicial punishment an obstinately disobedient son, and the ordained punishment was death by public stoning.

On this singular law I must dwell for a moment. I am not sure that an instance would ever occur under it of actual doom; seeing that the concurrence of father and mother was needful in preferring the charge of rebelliousness, and that some specific guilt, as of drunkenness, persevered in after chastisement, had to be alleged; yet, haply, there were sons whose wickedness wearied out a very mother's forbearance, and parents who felt that they must give up the irreclaimable rebel to the penalty of his wilfulness. I shall, at least, suppose a case to have happened, that we may note with what awful force the sin of disobedience to parents would be seen by appalled witnesses to be condemned, and abhorred of God. While yet my Hebrew citizen is but a boy, the scene is presented to his sight. There is an assemblage of people in the gate of the city, the grave elders have come forth and occupied the seats of judgment there; with downcast looks and agonized features, a father and mother approach, dragging with them a sullen youth; with trembling voice, the sire prefers the dread indictment against his own son, while the mother in mute anguish acquiesces; the magistrates receive the charge, and give the solemn word, he must die

the death; and the hands of fellow-citizens bury beneath avenging stones the man that scorned parental law. We may be sure that no ordinary measure of stubbornness would be required to expose a child to a doom so fearful, but when it was inflicted, every witness would be made to feel how heinous in God's sight must be the sin visited with punishment so condign.

There are, indeed, two aspects in which this statute, in accordance with general principles already laid down, requires to be viewed. In one of these, it was a salutary and humane limitation of the father's power over his children. The patriarchal being the primitive form of government, the power of a father was, in early times, absolute, in regard to his children, even, in some cases, to the disposal of their lives. Among other tribes, the disobedient son might fall, without challenge, by the hand of his father, smiting in hot ire. See how benignly the Mosaic statute made such rash or passionate proceeding impossible. If the son must die, it shall be for habitual hardened insubordination, the steps necessary for his condemnation must be taken concurrently by both parents, deliberately, and publicly, and his death must be the stroke of justice, at the hands of the general community. It is not possible to perceive how the stage of transition from paternal to public magistracy could be more wisely and safely passed.

But, on the other hand, here remains undoubtedly the stamp of God's reprobation placed on the sin of rebellion against parental authority. He holds the claims of father and mother high, who thus dooms with death their stubborn disregard. Is it wonderful, since, in the parental relationship is the beginning, if not the basis, of all rule among men, and the shadow and image of God's own? Obedience to parents may be said, in an obvious sense, to be the primary religion of a child. In the authority of those from whom

he derives his life, and on whose care he so absolutely depends, he learns first to understand the higher claim of the invisible Father, his Maker, and Preserver, and Lord. And although we are not bound, nor even warranted, to transfer from the Hebrew code to that of a people differently placed, and living in the gentleness of gospel times, such a law as that now before us, we may and ought to transfer from it to our hearts abhorrence for the filial disobedience which it brands so heavily. With the spirit of the law, moreover, agree all the Scriptures. The holy Jesus would not tolerate the consecration, even to temple service, of the substance needful for the comfort of father or mother, and quoting the Levitic commandment against the traditions of the elders, which made it void, exclaimed: "Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me."

I am not sure but an earnest word of warning on this head is needful for the young of the present day. The age, to say the least, is not burdened with respect for years or for authority. There is no little danger in a time of rapidly advancing knowledge and enterprize, that the up-growing generation be tempted to despise the judgment and counsel of older heads as slow and senile. Young men are in special danger here. There is a style of speech, moreover, as I have partly known and partly learned from others, prevalent among a certain class of youth, which has exchanged for the hallowed names of father and mother, designations which it is hard to think can ever be used without a covert disrespect. I trust there is not a young man here present to-night who permits himself to talk of his father as the "governor;" or to allude to his mother as "the old woman at home." It would be wrong to say that the employment of such unworthy slang is always and necessarily inconsistent

with dutiful affection, but if in any case mere thoughtlessness has given way to its adoption, in the name of filial love let it be heard no more. Never be ashamed of respectful reverence for parents. In the history of my native county it is recorded of one born in humble life, how after he had risen to considerable military rank in the service of his country, and had returned home to be courted by the magnates of his native town, he refused to accept any invitation where his humble father and mother would not be welcome also. It may be unfit to copy the manners of our forefathers, stately and severe, in those times when children would hardly without permission seat themselves in presence of their parents, and grown up sons and daughters knelt to receive parental benediction; but the spirit breathing in them may yet be healthfully studied. "Rise up, O youth, before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man;" and if the head with its glorious crown of grey hairs be thy father's, and the countenance which age has wrinkled, yet refined, be thy mother's, let thy reverence be trebly paid. "Hearken, O son, to thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old." There is not a finer sight to be seen anywhere than that of a strong son tending lovingly the steps of an aged mother. King Solomon was brave and grand, when surrounded with all his state he received the visit of the Queen of the South, and heard the honest outburst of her admiration sweeter far than studied flatteries; but to me he seems far grander in that scene, simply depicted by the historian of his reign, who tells us that as he sat on his throne his mother Bathsheba came to visit him, "and the king rose up to meet her, and bowed himself unto her, and sat down on his throne, and caused a seat to be set for the king's mother, and she sat at his right hand."

The Hebrew boy would grow up as other children, fond

of sports and pastimes. He would have his amusements and boyish avocations; would gather nuts in the summer woods, and go bird-nesting in the spring among the thickets. But he would find that even in his rambles through the fields and groves, the eye of the law was on him—restraining and instructing him. In one of those we suppose him to have found the little home of some feathered denizen of air—the dam is sitting on her eggs or callow brood, and, held by her very maternal instincts near her treasures, is taken captive with them. The boy bears his spoil home in triumph, and exhibits it to his parents. But he is immediately told that he may not retain it without transgressing the law, he must in any wise let the mother-bird go; and the child is taught a lesson of self-denial and obedience in little things as in great, by being directed to open his hand, and give the captive her liberty. What was that bird to God that He should thus surround it by a fence of law, and give it rights against the will of man? Ah! much: "are not two sparrows sold for a farthing, and one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father?" And much to man too, if in his treatment of it he can be taught a lesson of tenderness and humane consideration. To teach such lesson was, in part at least, the purpose of the Mosaic statute now referred to. Other ends might also be served. Some years ago alarm spread through France by the threatened extinction of the race of small birds: and, haply, the parent bird was by this law to be left, that by a future brood the winged tribe might be continued. But chiefly, we are persuaded, there was a lesson of graceful kindliness intended. You are robbing the parent of her family, or the hope of it; add not to her mourning the sorrows of imprisonment. The young know not the sweets of liberty, but she that has roamed the air, and built her nest with her mate, full well values it, let her be free—and

think, as you release her, at the bidding of the God of Israel, what a tender Father he must be who has a place for the little bird beneath the sheltering care of His holy law. But the statute alluded to is not alone in the Mosaic code as a teacher of humane consideration for the lower creatures; by various other precepts was the rule of man over the inferior creation tempered with kindness. The husbandman might not drive before him in one team, yoked to the plough, two beasts of such unequal strength and diverse temperament as the ox and ass. The wayfarer must not see his neighbour's ox or ass fallen under his load, or sunk into the ditch, without assisting to upraise him; even to a dumb brute no man in Israel might enact the part of the priest and the Levite in the parable, and having seen it lying prostrate, pass by on the other side. The farmer, threshing his wheat, by urging over the strown sheaves the feet of cattle, must leave them free as they pace their weary rounds, to solace themselves with mouthfuls of the grain; for it was written, "thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn." This law, as an apostle shows us, taught in parable a wider and higher lesson—but it taught this primarily, "the merciful man is merciful to his beast." And is it the stern harsh law of Moses that thus provides? Then may we say, that if, like some of the great men that have done the world's hardest and highest work, this law has a grave aspect, like those men, too, under whose gravity and severe port has ofttimes lain a heart simple and loving as a child's, it has also wondrous glances of tenderness and love. It towers in solemn majesty, but not like some of the rocks from which its voice was uttered—a bare, rugged, gnarled, dead cliff, with desert sands at its feet,—

"Lofty and steep, and naked as a tower,"

but with verdure springing at its base, its head crested with

evergreen pine, and its very face starred with blossoms, finding root in its crevices, and hanging it with beauty.

But now we must pass to another stage of life, and note by what commands the nobility and purity of youth were fostered under the Mosaic polity. The child has passed through boyhood into the opening prime of manliness—he goes abroad among the youths, he sees the maidens of his city in their beauty, and his breast begins to awake to the tender and exquisite susceptibilities of love. Awake at God's bidding; for He planted the sweet passion there, and never meant but that it should be cherished and unfolded; not, surely, without the government of reason, but not the less delightedly, because instructed and guarded by an understanding not given to the beasts that perish. I shall suppose my citizen in due time to find among the daughters of his people the Rachel of his heart; but meanwhile, ere yet he leads his espoused one home, let us see how the law, by a circle of enactments, warns him against all impurity, and throws its shield around the sanctities of wedded life. Some details must be omitted here, as less fitted for open discussion; but it would be impossible to pass, in reviewing the social laws of Moses, a feature so marked as the brand it affixes on all unchastity. Abominations practised among the heathens are abhorrently forbidden, on pain of death. The adulterer or adulteress must meet the same doom. A circle is marked off in the relationships of kindred, within which conjugal alliance is prohibited; prostitution is branded with strictest prohibition as a thing not to be known in Israel; the betrothed are accounted and protected as the married; and polygamy and divorce, though, as already stated in the prefatory and general observations, allowed, are yet restrained and discountenanced by certain enactments, conditioning and limiting the practice. There was especially one law that spoke with admonitory voice

to the Hebrew youth, walking amid the maidens of his people, proclaiming that the enticer of the non-betrothed to the loss of virgin-honour, should by the very success of his enticement bring himself under legal obligation to endow her for his wife—the father's authority only being recognised in the right of refusing to the seducer his daughter's hand. On what a true basis, in the nature of the marriage-union, this statute rested, may be seen by a careful study of the original law, pronounced in Paradise, and appealed to by our Lord, when he would show the indissolubility of the conjugal bond without sin. How far it would be possible to introduce the principle of it into modern legislation, I shall not venture to say: but it were well to have it embedded in the moral sentiments of the community. First intercourse between unmarried persons is not marriage, but in the sight of God it is an obligation to it, and nothing, without sin, can ever cancel the bond. What would be the effect if this were generally and strongly held in the community? I may err in my conclusion, but I apprehend it would go no inconsiderable way towards stemming the tide of certain dark and bitter waters overflowing the land. I doubt not, at least, it girdled the Hebrew maiden ofttimes as a hallowed defence.

Bowing, in loyal regard, to the spirit of all these enactments, the youth of my sketches holds on his early path in stainless honour, till he yields to the charm of some fair companion, and wins her for his bride. The betrothal has passed; and in due time, amid seemly festivities, and with accustomed ceremonial, he leads his treasure home. The blessing of the elders falls gently on the wedded pair, and mothers, with matronly salutation, bid them love and prosper, saying, as the happy husband's eye rests fondly on his beloved: "The Lord make the woman that is come unto thy house like Leah and like Rachel, which two did build the

house of Israel." Young man, tread you that path of untarnished purity; flee the strange woman as one whose guests are in the depths of hell, yet pitying as you flee; avoid all companionships that would lead you near her house of death, but find you in fitting time among the daughters of your country, one whom you can love and win to love; let her be kindred in spirit to your own, especially in the love of Jesus; and when, in the joy of espousals, you take her to your home, He who graced the marriage festival of His friends with his presence will dower you with his smile; and when you sit, in very amazement of a new and strange delight, beside your *wife*,—your own now, your very self,—think how He has thrown a sweet, bright halo of sanctity around your dear relationship by choosing it to be the figure of His own indissoluble union to His blood-redeemed people.

Two singular provisions in regard to the married relation will bring us by an easy transition to another topic. The times of Saul, in which I have supposed my Hebrew citizen to be born and nurtured, were times of much national trouble and conflict. Philistia, unsubdued in the original conquest of the land, had proved a thorn in the side of Israel, and, prior to the accession of Saul to the throne, had brought the chosen people into a state of great humiliation. At one period after the reign of their first monarch had begun, they lay disarmed and despoiled, almost at the mercy of their oppressors. This gave occasion for repeated trumpet-blasts of summons to arms throughout the tribes, and for many battles with an invading foe. But the Hebrew, with whose life I twine these comments, having, by supposition, just led home his bride, may for a time hear unheeding, without charge of cowardice or lack of love to country, these calls to the field and the fight: for it was ordained by the legislator of the commonwealth that the

newly-married citizen should, for twelve months' space, tarry at home, to cherish the wife of his heart, and to be near her, till familiarity with a new dwelling and its duties should wear away the sense of strangeness and loneliness inevitably growing out of her severance from dear ones in the scene of her earliest affections and associations. What a delicate and tender considerateness discloses itself in this provision! The Author of the law knew the heart of a daughter; knew that, however her love and trust might garner themselves in a husband's bosom, the soft shelter of a mother's affection and the strong stay of a father's fond regard, would at times be sorely missed — that the familiar faces and voices of the family circle would be oft yearned after—the very haunts of childhood be recalled with a sense of bereavement. So he said to the husband of less than a year: "Abide by her side, and sustain her in her new sphere: let her find, amid strange objects, your loved look and smile: be a shelter to the transplanted flower, till it has taken kindly root in the new soil, and can blossom forth its rest and joy." Akin to this statute was another, which sent home from the army in the field, before entrance on actual fight, every soldier who had betrothed, but not married, a wife, lest, the sword devouring his life, she, widowed, in a sense, ere wedded, should become the bride of another. Both regulations bring out beautiful traits of human sympathy on the rough edge of war.

But, indeed, the whole spirit of the Mosaic statute-book is, to a large extent, in anticipation of the humanity which, in later times, has civilized and softened the barbarities of ancient warfare. I need not picture what savage, ruthless work was done by the dire hand of conquering hosts among the heathen nations; but, in contrast with what may here be left undescribed, note, first, that all offensive war whatever was evidently discouraged by the Mosaic legislation. Those wars

of extirpation which put the Hebrew people in possession of the land promised to them were peculiar and exceptional. They were a work of judgment, commanded and executed upon nations ripe by manifold and abominable crimes for the stroke of vengeance. These the Israelites, as the hand of the Lord, were enjoined to prosecute till the doom was fulfilled; but no provision was made for embodying and training a standing army. The soldiers of the Hebrew commonwealth were just the citizen volunteers for emergencies of "defence, not defiance;" and the absolute prohibition to multiply horses, so as to obtain a force of cavalry, made distant wars of conquest next to impossible. Even in such wars as arose, the observance of the Mosaic law must have done much to smooth the rugged front of bloody strife. In the siege of a city, assault was not permitted till overtures of peace had been expressly tendered. On the acceptance of these, the state became tributary, and every life was to be spared. Only in case of the rejection of offered peace was the place to be besieged and taken by force; and even then limits were set to the rage of the sword. The men were to be slain, but the women and children of both sexes were to be saved alive. Substantially, this was anticipation of the rule in modern warfare which spares non-combatants; for the grown males, in the case supposed, would be the resisting soldiery; and if no quarter was to be given to the armed garrison, the severe injunction will not contrast unfavourably with the practice of other nations. When Alexander the Great, not without much of the generous and humane in his nature, was fretted by the long resistance made by Tyre to his arms, he signalized his capture of the place by nailing two thousand of the citizens to crosses, and leaving them to mingle with the murmur of the waves beating the beach the moan and wail of their long torture and agony. Another prescription, in the same chapter

where you find the law now noticed, deserves attention at a time when we have been made to hear of the desolation, dire and complete, triumphantly wrought by some generals in the unhappy American war. In a protracted siege, the fruit trees round the beleaguered place were to be left untouched by the destroying axe, that, when the war was ended, famine might not follow in its track. The present foe may be pressed to subjugation, but the dwellers of after years must not be warred against by destruction of the means of future sustenance. When one reads a statute like this, it seems as if the glittering edge of the sword were being covered with folds of soft silk, so peacefully does it sound in its humane anticipation. Indeed, had Israel executed at first God's judgment on the doomed nations of Canaan, and then dwelt under the shelter of the Divine protection assured to them, obediently observant of His worship and service, they would have presented the spectacle of a pacific commonwealth, kept from quarrels with surrounding tribes by justice and non-intervention, in some goodly measure a representative in miniature of the world's state, when the time shall come for disbanding for ever armed hosts, when "they shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning-hooks," when "nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

Let us next view our Hebrew citizen in the peaceful relations of a neighbour among his brethren. The consideration of this part of our subject will not detain us long, while it will lead us to touch on some very interesting points, and will form an easy link of transition to one of the most important topics of all. The laws of Moses, we may say here, at the outset and in a word, were such as to promote the strictest justice, and at the same time a brotherly kindness in dealings between man and man. Their considerate care of the poor was especially remarkable. The

whole social code in this department of duty, was pervaded by the spirit of the second great commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Thus, among all, the rights of property were scrupulously guarded, and many minute regulations were enacted, which proved the eye of legislation to be awake to the slight infringement of equity, as well as the great. For property destroyed or lost, the rule was full restitution; simple restitution, if the damage was accidental or undesigned, restitution sevenfold, if it had been feloniously abstracted. Yet what scrupulous care was taken to prevent the incidence of penalty, except in proportion to blame, may be seen in the statutes regarding the loss of oxen or other beasts of burden, in the twenty-second and twenty-third of Exodus. Thus, if a man should open a pit, and carelessly forget to cover it, so that a neighbour's ox or ass, stumbling into the perilous mouth, should be lost, the owner of the pit, for his culpable carelessness, was bound to make up the damage. But if an ox of one neighbour should be gored by that of another, the living and the dead property were to be shared between the two owners; unless the ox of one of them had been known by habit and repute as a bellicose animal, in which case the loss must be repaid to the other. A borrowed implement or beast injured or destroyed while in the possession of the borrower was to be paid for; but if the owner was with it, then it was a hired thing, and came at his own risk. In the transactions between buyer and seller, just weights, just measures, just balances, were imperatively enjoined. This principle of restitution is to be traced also in the *lex talionis*, or law of retaliation, which ordained "eye for eye, tooth for tooth," being certainly not a passionate enactment of revenge, not even, probably, a measure of mere punitive justice, but a rule of compensation in proportion to the damage inflicted. But in the present connection, it is peculiarly interesting to notice the

kindly sheltering care extended by the law to the weak and defenceless. The lonely stranger, fugitive, or wanderer, was never to be oppressed or neglected, and the law enjoining his reception and relief was enforced by tender memory of the condition of the fathers of the people in a foreign land. Remember, the law said, that thou wast a stranger in the land of Egypt. The poor brother, fallen into decay, was to be ungrudgingly helped. In the joyous time of reaping, the needy were not to be forgotten, the rigid exhaustive gathering of grain from the field, or of grapes from the vine, was forbidden in the interests of the indigent; gleanings alike of the harvest and the vintage were to be generously left that the destitute might collect them. Doubtless, it happened in more cases than that of loving Ruth, that some deserving poor gleaner was cheered by loose handfuls scattered in the way with a purposed carelessness. When the grain was carried, a forgotten sheaf was not to be fetched from the field, but left for the fatherless and the stranger, and the widow. The exaction of usury from a poor debtor was prohibited; the retaining of a pledged cloak beyond the sunset was forbidden, lest the poor neighbour should lack his needful nightly covering; the very wages of a poor workman must be given him with a daily punctuality, lest the delay of payment should occasion him temporary inconvenience or want. All these enactments are full of the spirit of regard for the rights of the humblest, and for the claims of mercy where strict justice may be supposed to fail. But, perhaps, the most remarkable of all the statutes of Moses regarding the poor is to be found in these words, in which legislation oversteps the bounds of mere material interests, and throws its shield, with a touching delicacy, over the very feelings of the child of penury and distress—"When thou dost lend thy brother anything, thou shalt not go unto his house to fetch his

pledge. Thou shalt stand abroad, and the man to whom thou dost lend shall bring out the pledge unto thee." Exquisite touch of considerateness for the poor man's sensitive spirit! If every Englishman's house is now his castle, it was so long before, at least in the dwelling of the Israelite driven by adversity to borrow of his brother on pledge. Tender, surely, must be the heart of that law which recognizes poverty as rendering the threshold sacred, and by a fence of prohibition to even a creditor makes its sanctity inviolable.

But, at least, it may now be said, there was one respect in which the poor man's lot might be made hard and cruel. Did not the law recognize his sale into bondage? and is it not chargeable, therefore, with the sanction of slavery? Allowing the word at present to pass, we may answer that, so far as the permission of the relation so indicated, and the enactment of statutes to regulate and bound it may be regarded as a sanction,—such sanction undoubtedly exists in the Mosaic statute-book. But we must not be misled by a name. What was the servitude into which a man among the Hebrews might pass through poverty or debt, and what is the process indicated by buying and selling? Here, first of all, let it be heedfully noticed, that no man of Hebrew blood could be reduced to servitude (except in cases of crime) against his will—he might sell himself, but no other man might sell him. There is an apparent exception in the case of a father selling his daughter for a maid-servant. But even supposing that the right of the father to do this was absolute, irrespective of the daughter's will, the case is not one of sale for servitude, but of giving away, for stipulated dowry, in marriage. This law belongs rather to the permission of polygamy, than to the question of slavery. With this exception—which is really none—there could be no selling of Hebrews by others than themselves—no middle-

men, dealers in slaves, were possible—the so-called sale and purchase were a transaction solely between the servant and the master. Then to what did the selling amount? Did the servant become in his person the property of the master, like his ox or ass, like his goods or chattels? Nothing of the sort; he became simply bound for service. He was in the condition, rather, of an indentured apprentice, than a slave. Still further, this servitude was terminable at any time, by redemption by the bound-man or his kinsman, and could in no case, except by his own free consent, last beyond the advent of the seventh year, the year of release. Nor was it simply that in that year the servant might go free—but, on his going out, the master was bound to see that he did not go empty-handed. The year of jubilee had the same releasing power with the seventh, and, in addition, secured the reverting to the original owner of all mortgaged lands. Even while his servitude continued, the Hebrew bond-man was protected by various humane laws; he was as truly as the free a member of the Israelitish congregation—maltreatment on the part of the master would have legally secured his freedom—and, in general, he had all the rights of a Hebrew citizen—his contract for service continuing to be fulfilled. He might be surrounded with all family endearments, have wife and children carried with him into servitude, or obtain a wife at his master's hand. In the former case, on his going free, the family were free with him; in the latter, the wife and children did not share his release from service. I put it thus, for the refusal of freedom to the wife was not the forcible separation of her from her husband—their conjugal relation still remained—only the one was bound, the other free. Yet, as this mixed condition of a household could scarcely be otherwise than inconvenient, it was provided, by another part of the law, that the husband might elect to continue in bound-service for life. But

in that case all must be deliberately and formally transacted, and a mark in his ear should evermore attest that by his own free-will he had chosen his condition, from love to his master, and love to the dear ones by whom his hearth had come to be surrounded in his master's service. There was another case of possible life-servitude; the case of a thief, unable to make the stipulated restitution—but penal servitude belongs to another category. As to the domestic relation (for domestic it really was) apart from this; it needs not many words to show how unlike it was to some "institutions" for which its example has been pleaded. Restricted to mere obligation to service, voluntarily entered into, guarded by humane regulations during its continuance, and limited in duration to six years at the most, it fails to deserve the designation of slavery at all, as the practice of other nations, ancient and modern, have brought the word to be understood.

It is admitted that a Hebrew master was allowed to hold in continued servitude bondmen and bondwomen from heathen nations, or from the families of strangers sojourning in the land, and even to leave them as a possession to children. But the connection in which the law stands, which allows this more protracted form of servitude, is such as to show particularly that it was only a permission, not an encouragement; the object of the whole statute being rather to set bounds to the servitude of the Hebrew, than to promote the enslaving of the stranger. But, not only so, the heathen bondman was under like humane regulations, as to treatment by his master, with the Hebrew servant—should the master maim or brutally abuse him, he by the act was bound to give him legal manumission—and, probably, the year of jubilee sounded the knell of freedom even to him. If captives in war were taken as bond-servants, it was under like conditions; and there is one provision in

this connection, so contrasted with heathen license, that it deserves special mention. A Hebrew soldier struck with the beauty of some female captive, was allowed to make her his wife; but that his act may not be that of mere passion, but deliberate, and surrounded by guarantees of sincerity, she must remain apart for thirty days, undergoing certain rites of purification, and, so to say, of introduction into the commonwealth of Israel. After this period only could she become a Hebrew wife, and if at any time the permitted right of divorce was exercised in her case, she was thenceforth a free woman. Another enactment this, guarding the helpless, restraining the passions of the strong, and throwing a shield over the sanctities of home.

The most remarkable thing of all, in regard to the treatment of even the foreign bondmen, must be stated in a sentence. When circumcised the slave became a member of the holy congregation—he joined with the family in the household sacrifice and feast of the passover—he stood with the congregation before the Lord, in the great religious festivals of the nation.

It is impossible, at the present time, to touch on this subject of slavery without being carried across the Atlantic to the scene of the most gigantic civil war ever, perhaps, waged on earth. Of the merits of the respective belligerents in that mighty conflict I shall say nothing. I shall neither affirm nor dispute on the one hand the right of secession by the Southern States; on the other, I shall neither contend for nor contest the right of coercing them back to union on the part of the North. I shall not even say whether the direct object of the South was to perpetuate slavery, or the Northern aim direct or indirect, primary or recent, to uproot it. These things do not seem to pertain to my subject. But it does pertain to my subject, as a due honour to the ancient law of Moses, to say that such a system of slavery as that which has

prevailed in this very century of Christianity could never have existed under the Hebrew statute book. It could never have even found a footing in Palestine. The primitive root of American slavery was man-theft; it rests on violent kidnapping. The swart race in America might lift their pleading voice in words like those of Joseph, and say, "Indeed I was stolen away from the land of my fathers, and even here I have done no wrong." Now, the Mosaic criminal code expressly doomed the man-stealer to death. Even the purchaser of a stolen man probably must have expiated his crime with his life. But if American slavery could have become by any process rooted in Palestine, the law of the land must have withered it. No slave-mart could ever have existed—no sale of slaves from one master to another—no compulsory separation of families—no repeal of the law of marriage—no prostitution of the helpless—no denial of the rights of citizens to the enslaved—no fugitive slave-law, even in regard to heathen runaways from Moab and Syria. In short, the whole thing would have been an impossibility under the laws of the Hebrew commonwealth. O, is it not humiliating and startling in the last degree, to think that what the Jewish legislation, in far-off and rude times, made thus impracticable, it should have been reserved for Christian nations to foster, and Christian men to plead for, and attempt to perpetuate. In this light it is hardly possible to exaggerate the dark criminality of modern slavery, especially as exhibited on the American continent. I have resolved to say nothing of North and South, in comparison or contrast; but I should be faithless to strong conviction, and to opportunity of uttering what I deem a solemn and instructive truth, did I not say, that in my deliberate judgment, slavery, in its direct and indirect influence, lies at the root of the sanguinary strife from which both North and South have suffered so dreadly

these four years, and may yet suffer much more—all other causes of alienation being as dust in the balance;—and that whatever we may say of human designs in the war, one purpose of Providence seems clear—the oppressed will go free. Alas! for the blood and woe that are the purchasing price; yet, since the world began, there has rarely been seen a more conspicuous instance of righteous retribution on a great national crime. "For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord: I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him."

One of the most remarkable events of the reign of King Saul was the proscription of wizardry and necromancy, by the banishment of all dealers with familiar spirits from the land. Like some other acts of this facile, impressible, but unsteadfast monarch, the decree of exile was in the eye of the law of Moses, but a half measure after all. "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live," was the stern word of the statute-book. The reader now almost instinctively sympathizes at first with the more lenient treatment of the king, and accords him the praise of a laudable mercifulness. But when God plainly commands, simple obedience is better than compromise, however plausible. When with a similar yieldingness and indecision Saul spared the King of Amalek against the express injunction of Jehovah, the prophet Samuel announced to him his forfeiture of the throne, and with his own hand executed justice on the ruthless prince, whom God had doomed to destruction. Not even under the plea of sparing the best of the flocks and herds for the purpose of sacrifice, would the faithful judge and seer approve the monarch's disobedience, saying,—"Behold to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." Moreover, we must first estimate the crime, before we accord approval to any interference with the execution of

the penalty. What then, was the witchcraft dealt with as a capital offence by the law of Moses? It was nothing less than treason against the theocracy. Let its dealing with familiar spirits be pretext or reality, its practice led the Israelites away from the true God, aimed to substitute for the holy oracle a lying device, and to put a new rule of duty in room of the law of God. It pleased God, through his priests, to give to his people responses from the invisible world—responses from himself, and the wizard's revelations were impious attempts to supplant the sacerdotal ephod, the Urim and Thummim, and the acredited prophets of heaven. It is very noticeable that it was after the Lord had departed from Saul, and refused to answer him in any of the modes alluded to, that he went in his extremity and despair to the witch of Endor. From this its essential character of rebellion against God, we may conclude that the unholy imposture was generally employed to entice to idolatry—a view countenanced by what is said in Deuteronomy of the false prophet and the dreamer of dreams. What more heinous offence then, could be committed against the theocratic government than this very practice of wizardry, and what wonder if its doom was death? The law of Moses must not be judged as we judge modern statutes, which sent poor wretches to the stake, who, though probably not always innocent of tricky and malignant practices, were certainly not capital offenders against the State, were frequently condemned by the most ridiculous and wicked ordeals, and were often, probably, nothing more than the possessors of superior sagacity to that of their neighbours, or, haply of some acquaintance with occult scientific facts, not unnaturally employed by them to make some defence against their ignorant and superstitious persecutors.

The question how far the wizard and soothsayer of Bible times was actually the tool, consciously or otherwise of

Satanic influence, is harder to settle. A careful adduction of Scripture passages bearing on the theme, and a thorough investigation of their testimony, would be needful preparation for a decided judgment. Such a review is impossible here. But I may say, that as I cannot read the Gospel narratives, and resolve, on any theory of their inspiration or truthfulness, the demoniac possessions into mere instances of epilepsy, insanity, or other malady; so I cannot shut out, from the soothsaying of the Bible, the presence and direction of unclean spirits. If it be said, that if Satanic agency be in the enchantments and necromancy of Scripture, then must we carry out the conclusion, and hold that it is present in all similar phenomena—I will not indeed accept the argument as invincible, for I can conceive that one way in which Christ was to destroy the works of the devil, was to put an end, by the introduction of the Gospel day, to demoniacal possessions and devil-inspired oracles; but I will grant the conclusion pleaded for to be more reasonable than the opinion that these things were never of Satan at all. I shall sooner believe that some modern forms of insanity, —such, for example, as suffer lifelong restraint in gloomy Broadmoor,—are true possessions by demons, than that the possessions of the Gospels were only examples of madness. So I shall sooner believe that, even to this day, Satan moves and uses dealers in intercourse with the invisible world, than I can be brought to conclude that the soothsaying damsel cured by Paul had no unclean spirit, which, having controlled and dwelt in her, left her at the Apostle's word. But this is no way inconsistent with the belief that, in the wizard's practices, there was much mere legerdemain, jugglery, trick, or employment of chemical or electric secrets, making deception easy. All these things, used for deceit lie germane to the hand of the lying spirit. As in possessions, there might be bodily disease aiding the very subser-

viency to a demon's will, which was yet the true calamity; so Satanic agency might well work through all means of deluding and confounding the dupes of his devices. That he did so, I cannot doubt. Take the case of the witch of Endor, of whose dealings with the invisible world we have the most detailed account, and who may be regarded as the great prototype of spiritualistic mediums. I believe her to have served Satan, not God. Yet I see nothing in her manipulations and vaticinations which might not be accomplished by clever trickery. Her prophecy, that Saul should die next day, was a guess that one less sagacious might have easily hazarded; or rather, it was a conclusion that any one might have drawn from the poor king's abandonment and despair. He came to Endor with the confession, that the Lord had forsaken him, his consultation with the witch was itself an aggravated capital offence against the God of Israel; the Philistines were at hand eager for battle; the forfeiture by Saul of the throne of Israel was well known; it was not hard to conclude that his ruin was at hand. Not to say that the gloomy prediction, by just retribution, helped to fulfil itself. The shadow of the oracle he himself had evoked, hung black around him, when he fell on his own sword, and closed by suicide one of the most melancholy and warning histories of the Bible.

This subject has at present a special interest lent it by the origination and alleged wide prevalence of modern spiritualism. In America, in this country, and on the Continent, there have appeared of late years many claimants to intercourse with the unseen world, and volumes of communications with departed spirits have introduced a new species of literature to curious readers. I had occasion, two or three years ago, to dip into some of these effusions, and to form an opinion on the subject of spiritualistic phenomena, from which, in the main, I have seen no reason since to

depart. I give this conclusion here, without entering into detailed discussion, the more readily, that it was formed before certain recent manifestations drew attention to some phases of the subject. Taking the whole appearances, then, into account, I am satisfied that they cannot be regarded as mere delusion, hallucination, or dream; nor is the supposition of trick and juggling imposture sufficient to account for them. That there is a vast amount of this in the exhibitions, with the character of which we have been lately familiarised, I make no question; nor do I doubt that almost all the mere materialistic phenomena could be produced by clever conjuring, with opportunity for preparation. But this will not account for all that seems credibly attested. On the other hand, the theory of the agency of disembodied spirits, is without evidence, and against it. If there be spiritual agency at all, it can only be Satanic. Yet I have felt, in wading through specimens of spiritualistic effusions and narratives of phenomena, that it was almost an indignity to the fiend himself to ascribe to him such ineffable puerilities, except on the principle that the tempter will play with straws, if thereby he may hoodwink or lead astray to vanity a foolish human soul. If neither illusion, nor trick, nor spiritual agency, be accepted as the explanation, you ask what then? I answer, that amid a vast amount of fancy, imposture, jugglery (haply, too, of permitted Satanic deceits), there are in the midst of these exhibitions, as in the kindred ones of mesmerism, biology, clairvoyance, and trance, impingings on the discovery of some physical power, which, hereafter, better understood and cleared from superincumbent rubbish, may perform no unimportant part in the material or even mental advancement of the race. As to the manifestations freshest in the minds of the community at present, we cannot help thinking, that both the alleged spiritual agents, and their

embodied consociates, might study with advantage the old canon of Horace, in giving laws to Epic poesy :

> " Nec Deus intersit, nisi dignus vindice nodus
> Inciderit."

Freely translated thus :—

> Nor let a god upon the scene appear,
> Save for a juncture worthy of a god.

Still more freely paraphrased in this fashion :—

> Don't bring a spirit from the world unseen,
> To rap your pate or drum on tambourine,
> Or loosen knotted ropes from limb or wrist,
> Which juggler's skill may quite as well untwist.

But in another view these manifestations deserve a more serious word. I know not how far the exhibitors now abide by the theory of the presence of departed spirits, and of their agency in producing the varied phenomena of the *structure;* but I will put the case thus regarding all like displays. If the parties believe in such spiritual interpositions, they are much to be pitied for their conceptions of a future and invisible state of being. If, knowing not to what to ascribe the performances, they are as anxious as others to make the discovery, they must submit to many more conditions than heretofore to accredit their sincerity. If, aware that all is trick and sleight of hand, they will only avow as much, they may be left to try rival feats with others of the adroit brotherhood, without much interest on the part of men who have earnest work to do. But if, knowing that there is nothing more than clever jugglery any performers of such phenomena shall venture to ascribe the result to the intervention of the departed dead, then the sooner they can be made to stand forth in the shame of an exposed cheat the better. And when they shall be stript of their pretensions, and proved to have been conscious im-

postors, let them be visited with the indignant and unstinted reprobation of the world. I scarcely know a crime more worthy of condign visitation of scorn and rebuke than that which should put forth a lying trick in the name of the dead. The pretence is an affront to both worlds, it outrages the sweetest hopes of humanity, it tramples on some of the dearest sanctities of our nature, it burlesques the grandest and holiest aspirations of mankind. I should invoke no pains and penalties on the heads of such wicked libellers and caricaturists of the awful eternity as I have supposed—let us hope that the supposition is too dark for realization—but no amount of moral indignation could be too withering. Set them forth in the exposure of their detected impiety, and let men "clap their hands at them, and hiss them from their place."

One only topic more remains—to be touched more slightly than its importance deserves. Nothing in the laws of Moses is more emphatically prominent than their tendency to nourish abhorrence of blood-shedding by the hand of violence. In loudest tones you hear there the solemn command, "Thou shalt not kill." The murderer's doom was death. Even a master smiting his servant to death must expiate his crime with his life. No satisfaction whatever was to be taken for his life, no sanctuary to be regarded as sacred when blood was to be avenged. From the very altar of God himself the wilful homicide might be dragged forth to die. Thus was it in the case of Joab, for when justice, too weak in David's hand to smite his great lieutenant, overtook him at last in the beginning of the reign of Solomon, whom he fatally opposed, Benaiah smote the hoary murderer where he stood grasping the altar horns. But perhaps nothing in all the statute-book is fitted to impress on the mind the degree of criminality attached to murder so much as the appointment of a ceremonial for

cleansing the land from the blood of a murdered man, when justice failed to discover the assassin. This most significant, I had almost said, picturesque enactment is to be found in the twenty-first chapter of Deuteronomy, in the following words :—

"If one be found slain in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee to possess it, lying in the field, and it be not known who hath slain him : then thy elders and thy judges shall come forth, and they shall measure unto the cities which are round about him that is slain : and it shall be, that the city which is next unto the slain man, even the elders of that city, shall take an heifer, which hath not been wrought with, and which hath not drawn in the yoke : and the elders of that city shall bring down the heifer unto a rough valley, which is neither eared nor sown, and shall strike off the heifer's neck there in the valley : and the priests the sons of Levi shall come near ; for them the Lord thy God hath chosen to minister unto him, and to bless in the name of the Lord ; and by their word shall every controversy and every stroke be tried : and all the elders of that city, that are next unto the slain man, shall wash their hands over the heifer that is beheaded in the valley : and they shall answer and say, Our hands have not shed this blood, neither have our eyes seen it. Be merciful, O Lord, unto thy people Israel, whom thou hast redeemed, and lay not innocent blood unto thy people of Israel's charge. And the blood shall be forgiven them. So shalt thou put away the guilt of innocent blood from among you, when thou shalt do that which is right in the sight of the Lord."

This passage, of course, contains but the law. Nor have we anywhere in Scripture the account of its fulfilment in an actual case. If, however, even in our own secure times, and settled country, there does every now and then occur

such an incident as the statute contemplates—the discovery of a dead body, evidently slain by violence, but none can tell by whom—we may be sure that in Palestine, in a rougher age, there would be frequent occasion for the application of the law. We may, therefore, most warrantably translate the language of the statute into the words of narrative, and suppose a scene transpiring in the inheritance of some of the tribes in which all here directed to be done was actually carried into effect.

In attempting to bring the solemn circumstances of such an occurrence before our mind, we are led, first of all, to call up the conception of a discovered murder in some rural district. We can vividly present to ourselves the spreading wave of horror and consternation. Some shepherd on his rounds by night, or some one musing in the fields, has lighted on a corse, gashed by some mortal wound, lying in its blood. (So lay the martyred Abel slain by his wicked and envious brother.) He runs to bruit the tale. With a swift wing, for nothing spreads sooner than terror, the tidings fly abroad; the whole neighbourhood is roused; men forsake their avocations to flock towards the spot; the dead is probably recognised by mourning relatives, and sorrow and wail mingle with feelings and utterances of horror. And as in our own country to the south of the Tweed, on any such occasion, a coroner's inquest would be held, so in Israel agreeably to the Divine code, it was necessary that information be forthwith lodged with the magistrates of the land. The judges and rulers thereupon of the surrounding district, perhaps of the tribe, are convened, and proceeding to the spot where the dead had been discovered, decide, by careful measurement, if necessary, to what city the duty of further execution of the law must be assigned, as the nearest to the scene of murder. Meanwhile, doubtless, all inquiries are prosecuted which may

tend to discover the criminal and bring him to the bar of justice. But should, still,—to use our own legal language,—the verdict be against some person or persons unknown, then the elders of that nearest city take steps to purge the community and the land from the stain of innocent blood. Following the Divine prescription, they go forth on a fixed day, accompanied, doubtless, by a throng of the people of their own and neighbouring towns, leading with them a young untrained heifer, until they reach some rugged and uncultivated dell: and there, with solemn mien and manner, they strike off the victim's head, while the outpoured blood sinks in the earth, or is swept away by the torrent. To see all done according to the law of Moses, some of the priests of the Lord stand by. Then over the slain animal the officiating magistrates wash their hands in token of guiltlessness; and with prescribed words of high protestation affirm their innocence of this murder, or of knowing and concealing the murderer. By them the whole assembly are understood to speak, and clearing themselves according to the Divine requirement, they approach, led probably by the priests, the mercy-seat of their King, beseech his forgiveness for the land, and return to their homes beneath the smile of his propitious favour. So Israel puts away the guilt of blood-shedding from its midst.

The first impression of many readers of the statute, the requirements of which we have now been supposing carried into effect in a specific case, may naturally be, that the heifer thus devoted to death was slain in sacrifice. But a slight consideration will correct this impression. The cow is not taken from the class of animals usually selected for sacrifices; she is not brought to the Lord's altar; she is killed, not by the priests, but by the civil rulers. Neither is it said that atonement is made by her blood. She is, therefore, to be viewed as the victim simply of justice, and

her death as a symbolic representation of what the murderer deserved at the rulers' hands; their performance of the rite, acquiesced in by all the people, being an acknowledgment at once of the desert of the criminal, and their readiness to execute doom on him when discovered and convicted. It is, indeed, said that the blood shall be forgiven the people; but the meaning is, that its punishment should not fall on the community that had thus purged itself.

The design of this remarkable statute was twofold. It would serve powerfully to promote the discovery of the murderer; and it would, with even greater power, serve to maintain in the community a salutary horror of the crime of shedding blood. It would aid the discovery of guilt. For the immediate and inevitable consequence of this law, in every case of death by untraced violence, would be to concentrate the attention of whole neighbourhoods on the fact, to do what a widely-circulated press does among ourselves: it would set all to talking, inquiring, conjecturing, and clearing themselves; it would almost force every inhabitant of the district to protestations of innocence. In these circumstances, how hard for guilt to hide itself! Shall it say nothing? or shall it, with a foul conscience, profess innocence? Silence and speech appear alike perilous to the limed soul; and when the day of awful ceremony comes, shall the murderer absent himself, and brave suspicion, or shall he venture into that dark valley of purgation, hold up his head among the rest when prayer is made for the Lord's mercy after solemn protestation of guiltlessness? Shall he venture to witness, with his laden soul, the symbolic representation of his own deserved doom? I doubt not, in all the circumstances of the case, that the existence of this law often prevented, so to say, the need for its own full execution, by detection of the man-slayer through the inquiries necessarily made prior to its being carried into effect.

But, again, the statute was fitted and designed to maintain on the consciences and hearts of the people a healthful sense of the enormity of the crime of murder. Not only known criminals must suffer, but blood shed by unknown hand must be purged away, or it will rest on the community in the midst of which it has been spilt. This purgation, moreover, must be made by solemn, public, impressive ceremonial. How vividly all this would tend to promote a feeling of the heinousness of the crime of murder itself, and stay men's hands from blood! And this moral education of the innocent citizenship of a country is one of the most important ends of the infliction of punishment; not only in so far as it deters from the commission of the crime punished, but inasmuch, also, as it promotes and preserves a just estimate of the criminality. Were acknowledged crime unvisited in a nation with deserved award, not only would the vicious be encouraged to commit it, but the entire moral tone of the people would suffer deterioration; the unpunished guilt would spread abroad as a miasma, contaminating men's hearts; and the increase of actual misdeeds might be very far from being the worst result of bearing the sword in vain.

Yet, notwithstanding the wonderful emphasis of condemnation thus impressed on the crime of murder, we may not argue from the code of Moses to the obligation of maintaining capital punishment as its meed in later times and other lands. A presumption may be raised in favour of its enactment as a fitting penalty; but we cannot plead for more. But is Scripture silent elsewhere on the subject? Is there nothing to guide communities, in all ages and conditions, as to their punitive treatment of the dark crime of wilful murder? By those who think there is something in God's word on this head, appeal is made to various passages. We content ourselves with reference to two, the chief—one in the Old Testament, the other in the

New. The first is in these familiar words: "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God made He man." This, we think it is fairly contended, is an unrepealed statute for the race. In support of this view, it is further justly argued, that the reason alleged for the declaration proves it to be a command, not a prophecy, and one for the whole human family. In the image of God made He man. But I am not sure that the argument from this clause has generally been put in the most conclusive way. For what is this a reason? Is it for capital punishment simply, or is it for the infliction of capital punishment at the hand of man? Or, to put the question differently, is it a reason to show the aggravated nature of the crime, or to vindicate the hands that execute the doom? I strongly hold the latter. That man is made in God's image, and is, therefore, so noble, may be thus far as much a reason for not marring that image by the blood-shedding of magisterial sentence as by the blood-shedding of murderous assault. But suppose the reason assigned for the instrumentality enjoined in execution of the sentence, and how lofty and apposite the sense becomes! The murderer's blood shall be shed by man, for man was made in the image of God. The consequence of his creation in the Divine likeness was his investiture with dominion; and that rule of his is not over the lower creatures, but is now also a moral government over man himself. The magistrate, embodiment and representative of social humanity, becomes the minister of God, avenging evil on criminals of mankind themselves. If this view be correct, the abolition of capital punishment, as enjoined in the precept of Noah, would be something like abdicating in this case the God-given sovereignty of man. But perhaps the New Testament has enjoined the abdication. If so, let it be shown by texts not evidently applicable to personal individual feelings, but

to magisterial ministration of punitive retribution. And if so, let it be explained why the New Testament should arm the magistrate with a sword, the distinctive use of which is to slay. To divide, it has been said: yes, if you will, to divide; but, as in the case of Solomon's command to part the living child between the contending mothers, to divide by killing.*

Yet while dooming the wilful murderer to death the law carefully distinguished between witting and unwitting homicide. For the latter a safe and accessible asylum was provided in the cities of refuge scattered over the land. The law by which this was enjoined will bear favourable comparison, whether on the one hand with sanctuaries for fugitive criminals in ancient and later times, which often times became the haunts of the worst of men, banding themselves into a community of vice; or on the other hand, with the rude and ireful justice, which took no note of intention, but demanded in every case blood for blood. The manner in which doom was executed on the murderer in early times, was by the hand of the blood-reclaimer, the nearest of kin to the slain man. The first form of all is probably indicated in Cain's complaint—"Whosoever findeth me shall slay me,"—the human instinct arming every one with right to avenge slaughter. But as patriarchal rule came to establish itself, delegation of the duty to the nearest kinsman

* Constrained to brevity at this point of the lecture, the author wishes to append, in a few words, two remarks. First, the question of the obligatoriness or the propriety of capital punishment for proved wilful murder, is different from that of the best mode of executing such punishment, whether, as with us, by public hanging, or otherwise. Secondly, it must be confessed that the mingled abhorrence and contempt with which the mere executioner of justice, in cases of doom, is regarded by the community, argues slight appreciation of those high grounds on which alone, as it seems to the lecturer, the stern penalty of death can be vindicated.

by the father and chief of the tribe would become natural. An incident in the life of Gideon seems to illustrate this. When Zebah and Zalmunna stood before him, convicted from their own mouths of slaying his brethren, he said to his own firstborn nearest of kin, after the chief himself, "Up and slay them." Become thou the blood avenger. The timid youth shrunk from the task, and the stern hero became himself the executioner. This method of executing doom on the murderer Moses did not introduce, but recognized and regulated. Never, we may conclude, was the murderer's life to be taken in private, but after proved guilt. For even in the case of the manslayer, such trial was needful to establish his right to asylum. That proved, he was safe—the avenger of blood was turned back from the gate, by all the authority of the commonwealth obeying the will of heaven. I have almost lost sight of my citizen, with the line of whose life I have been twining these comments. Let me resume that line for a moment now in the close, and seeing that the most virtuous as well as others, may without intention, be the occasion of a neighbour's death, let me suppose him unhappily involved in such dire misfortune. Now may he gratefully acknowledge the equity and humanity of the law under which he lives; ere yet the blood-avenger can arrive to claim retribution, he arises and flees along the well-kept road; he sees the open gate of the refuge city, he passes within, and is meanwhile secure. His case is brought before the congregation, and it is decided that he and his may reside in unchallengeable safety within the city. Yet he must reside there, or forfeit his privilege, till the death of the High Priest, or, perhaps, if occurring at an earlier date, till the year of Jubilee. How wonderfully in this statute was anticipated the spirit of the enlightened legislation of modern times, that distinguishes between non-criminals

seeking refuge, and violent men who would abuse the shelter afforded them by making it a screen for acknowledged crimes; and that, again, draws a line of distinct demarcation between murder and simple manslaughter. It is true our Christian judgment and feeling let the wholly unwitting manslayer abide without blame among his fellow-citizens, chastened only by his own lasting and sorrowful regrets; the times for which Moses legislated made this not yet expedient, but the moral root of the later sentiment was implanted by the law that sent the manslayer, banished, indeed, in a sense, but safe, to the city of refuge.

That benignant law had a higher reference, which may give me my parting thought. I leave my Hebrew citizen—by supposition, in the city of refuge. Dear hearers, do I leave you there? There is a doom-dealer on your track, as sinners. Have you escaped from his hand? Have you found the refuge from just recompense of evil deeds? Are you in Christ? If so, then are you safe for ever. For our High Priest—we who have fled for refuge to the hope set before us, may joyfully say—OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST CANNOT DIE.

Rivers:

NOTES ON THE LAWS WHICH THEY OBEY AND THE LESSONS WHICH THEY TEACH.

A LECTURE

BY

THE REV. WILLIAM ARNOT,
EDINBURGH.

RIVERS.

"The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water: He turneth it whithersoever He will."—PROV. xxi. 1.

AMONG other facts drawn both from nature and art, the process of irrigation is employed in Scripture to represent and enforce moral truth. The complete control exercised by an agriculturist over the rivulet which he has tamed, shadows forth the parallel fact in a higher sphere, that God in his providence over-rules and restrains at pleasure, both the secret purposes and overt acts of men. As the owner of a field or a vineyard can admit the streamlet within his enclosures, or shut it out at will, so the Supreme, operating unseen upon the secret springs of thought in a human heart, can shape the ambition of princes, and wield the resources of nations, so as to accomplish thereby his own designs.

I shall borrow from the Scripture its germinal conception, and its vivid poetical phraseology, but shall not confine my view within the limits of a text. Taking the fundamental idea from the sacred proverb, I shall, on this occasion, literally run away with it, and employ it freely in the prosecution of my own design. My river rises indeed within the dominion of King Solomon; but I do not undertake that it shall not cross the boundary ere its course be done. Once

set such a stream a running, and no man can tell how many kingdoms it shall traverse ere it reach the sea.

In a matter like this, I do not make much of the distinction between a king and a common man. In respect to the secret impulses which impart direction and force to a life, every man is kingly. A certain self contained lordliness belongs to man as such, apart altogether from the position which he may happen to hold among his fellows. Although his action externally is ever liable to be checked by superior power, every man is a king in the castle of his own heart. There, though under law to God, he is free from the inspection and control of his brother. Moreover, when God's hand is put forth, it turns the hearts of sovereigns and of subjects with equal ease. It is not more difficult for the law of gravity to hold the ocean in its bed, than to keep the corolla of a snowdrop pointing to the ground. In like manner, it is as easy for God's hand to control the life of kings as the life of common men. There is not an easy and a difficult among the tasks which the Infinite and Omnipotent undertakes and performs. The heart of the king, then, whether he be simply a man, and as such king of creation, or be in addition invested with royal authority over millions of his kind,—the heart of the king, in itself, and without respect to the method of turning it, *is like the rivers of water ;—*

1. In the secret springs of its power. As the ultimate sources of a river are minute, manifold, hidden, such also are the germs of thought that spring in a human heart, and constitute the volume of a human life. The chambers where thoughts and purposes have their birth, are as deep and inscrutable as the caverns of the earth where the primal elements of rivers rise. In either case, it is only when they burst forth and flow along the surface that they become known. One step farther the analogy may be safely traced. As these springs that issue from the ground are caused by

drops that fall in infinite numbers from the sky, so the emotions that swell in a human heart, and break forth into the body of a human life, are in the last resort subject to influences from above that distil manifold and secret as the dews of night. None can by searching find out God; nay more, none can by searching find out all that lies in the creature man. More secret and trackless than a bird in the air, than a ship on the sea, is the germinal emotion that quivers in the king's heart, and thence sends forth the hundred-fold fruit of energy that constitutes the life-course of the king.

2. The king's heart is as the rivers of water, inasmuch as many springs rising in different and even opposite quarters, meet and constitute the life. From east and west the Black and the White Nile meet and form a single stream, which thenceforth flows in one compact volume toward the sea; thus the distinct and even contradictory emotions that spring in a man's heart go all into the volume of his history. Benevolence and self-interest, although they flow from opposite quarters, meet and unite their forces in a single course of action. Ah, even useful lives would give little glory to the living man, if all the secret motives which animate them were dissected and displayed; but greater honour on that account redounds to the Supreme Ruler of the world who so controls and combines these conflicting materials, that they all conspire for the accomplishment of His plan. He can make the wrath of man to praise Him; and with equal ease He overrules for the same end man's selfishness and pride. No analysis can disintegrate the mass of a human life and resolve it into the various elements of which it is composed; as well might you attempt to separate the particles which each of many affluents supplied, after the river has rolled in a single bed over a course of a thousand miles.

3. A river, when it has once begun to flow, flows on, and ever on, by a changeless law; and a human life after it has leapt from its secret spring can no more stop than a river on its course. It is a solemnizing, perhaps a sad experience to awake into rational consciousness as childhood is passing away, and discover that in your own being a life has started which must go forward to eternity, as a river once begun must continue its course to the ocean. To make the discovery suddenly would shake, would shatter us; it would be like passing straight with open eyes from midnight to midday. The discovery in either case is made gradually, and so made safely; manhood springs from childhood as day grows out of dawn.

When I dip down into the lower strata of my memory, and analyse the experiences of childhood, preserved there like fossils for inspection in maturer years, I find that this discovery put the little man much about. He was frightened, he was angry, he was sad, by turns; but after chafing a while against the fact and the sovereignty of God in ordaining it, he was compelled to submit. The infant stream could not annihilate itself or stop its own course; on, on, it must flow, knowing well though forgetting oft, that at every leap it was coming nearer the illimitable eternity. Faith alone can remove this mountain, can pluck the sting out of this death, can turn the world of this grief upside down, so that it shall emerge a great joy. God our Saviour gives us songs in the night; "Nearer, my God, to Thee; nearer to Thee!"

4. The volume flows with irresistible power. No human force can stop a river in its course; and no human force can arrest that stream of thoughts and resolves which constitute the soul of a human life. Prisons and scaffolds are thrown across its bed in vain. Chafed by the impotent obstructions, the stream of a true man's beliefs and purposes leaps over or sweeps them away. Some of the grandest

passages of the grandest lives have occurred where puny hands essayed to dam the current back. People flock to see a river precisely at the spot where the spur of a neighbouring mountain protrudes into its bed, and rudely attempts to bar its passage by a wall of rock. The river, great at other points, is sublime and heroic there. Great lives, kingly men, are greatest where persecutions cross their path. The histories both of Church and State teem with examples. John Knox and John Hampden would have been two goodly rivers although they had been let alone—might have swept through grassy meadows in courses both broad and beneficent; but it was the persecutions they endured that imparted to their history its peculiar grandeur. It is because obstructing rocks were thrown across their bed that their white boiling waters may to-day be descried afar, and the mighty hum of their life-course resounds still in a nation's ears.

5. A river is constantly receiving affluents and consequently increasing in magnitude as it advances on its course. Every stream that falls into the river from right or left adds to the bulk of its volume, and so the farther the river goes, the greater the river grows. It is thus with every true and manly life: broader it becomes and deeper at each successive stage as the man moves forward among his fellows. Every contact with his neighbours augments a true man's power. Many rivers that have run long courses and grown great thereby, are gliding majestically to-day over the wide expanse of society, spreading fertility and fragrance all around. Many a Whittington in our own age has begun with a cat or something less, and ended with a metropolitan mayoralty or something larger. There is hope for every tiny stream as it trickles down the slopes of the hills, in the season of youth, for most of the mighty rivers began the world as rills.

But another experience runs opposite and parallel; some

rivers give off branches right and left as they flow, and consequently dwindle into insignificance. Some lives lose influence and power at every turn, and at last in old age, may be scheduled as unproductive capital Not long ago I was invited to lecture in a certain city to a society of working men. Along with the invitation they inclosed a card containing the name of the preceding lecturer in the course and the subject that he had chosen. The lecturer was a very eminent physician, and the lecture was "On Men who have Risen." The thought sprang up in my heart, quick and clear as an echo, I shall lecture "On Men who have Fallen." When the time came I lacked courage to carry out my plan; but I am convinced that a lecture could be given on that head, less pleasant indeed, but equally profitable. The theme, though a melancholy one, might be made both arresting and instructive.

The course which rivers take over continents, affords some of the most instructive proofs of wise and beneficent design in the preparation of the earth as a dwelling place for man. For example, the slope of the land in the interior of Africa has been so adjusted that the waters which spring south of the Equator must make their way to the sea northward by the channel of the Nile, and thus the valley that gets no rain from heaven, has become, notwithstanding, the most fertile valley on the earth.

The same Lord, who, behind the curtain of second causes, thus controls in secret the course of a river, determines by similar methods and for similar ends, the magnitude and the direction of a good man's life. A degenerate race sow their seed to-day on the well-watered plains of Egypt, after the river has retired within his banks, without thinking who their benefactor may be, or how his beneficence may have been dispensed. The God who gave the Nile to Egypt is in

Egypt an unknown God; but far off and long ago, many a valley was raised and many a mountain made low in order that rainless Egypt might be a well-watered land. It is thus that great good lives are given to nations, and that nations often fail to value the gift and revere the Giver. To Germany Luther was given; to North America, Washington; and to Britain in our own day, Victoria the Queen. I speak in simplicity, a settled conviction of my mind, when I say that the same God who gave Egypt the Nile, and North America the Mississippi, has by similar methods and with similarly blessed results, at the most critical period for governments in all nations, placed a large-hearted and virtuous woman upon the mightiest of this world's thrones. The man who has witnessed the course of history for the last thirty years, and yet does not thank God for the Queen, I think neither understands nor deserves his privileges.

Three Scotch girls, inmates of a boarding-school in Switzerland, were seated with their schoolfellows at the dinner-table, when the master suddenly read aloud from a newspaper the telegraphic announcement of Prince Albert's death. Those three young but loyal British subjects were smitten instantly with a strange deep grief; their drooping heads and mute astonished looks surprised the young republicans, in whose breast such a sentiment had never been nursed, and their surprise expressed itself in laughter. Stung to the quick by this inconsiderate levity, the three as if moved by a single impulse, burst simultaneously away from the company, rushed to their own room, and there wept and prayed by turns, until their full hearts relieved themselves by overflowing. Such loyalty is akin to family love, and, like it, is most precious to a people. It is a law of cohesion among the parts of a community, which prevents the mass from dissolving into chaos when waves of insurrectionary unrest sweep across a continent.

Let us look now to the turning of the river after its main direction has been determined, and its stream has begun to flow. To turn a river, may mean now one and now another of two different things: it may mean a diversion of the water in whole or in part from the natural bed of the river for a limited space and a limited time, while the whole ultimately finds its way back, and follows its natural course to the ocean; or it may mean the absolute arrestment of the river in its course, so that it shall be compelled to retrace its steps backward and upward towards its birthplace. The first of these is in some measure competent to man; the second lies completely and absolutely beyond his reach.

I. Consider first, that turning of the river which is partial and temporary in its nature, and may in some measure be accomplished by human hands. The objects contemplated when rivers are turned aside by human art are mainly two: they are turned sometimes for the purposes of *irrigation*, and sometimes in order to generate and employ *mechanical power*.

1. In regions where rain is rarer than in this island, one of the chief cares of the cultivator is to get his fields watered in the time of drought. For this purpose streams are intercepted, and led aside in artificial channels, that they may spread the water on the thirsty ground. Small rivulets are carried off bodily for this purpose, and portions of larger rivers are seduced into the service of the agriculturist. The pasture fields of Switzerland, for example, are veined like a human hand or the leaf of a tree by small ducts, which convey the water in ever diminishing quantities as the subdivision proceeds to every portion of the soil. You may see from time to time a solitary peasant stalking through the field with a large slate in his hand, plunging it into the sod successively across each of the miniature rivers, compelling it for the time to overflow its banks and flood the surrounding space.

This process has been carried out on a vast scale of late years by the British government in India. Canals, hundreds of miles in length, and of dimensions equal to important rivers in this country, have been constructed, and are now carrying fertility to tracts that formerly were desert. The work, it is said, has incidentally struck another blow at the root of the national idolatry; for the multitude can scarcely be persuaded to rest so peacefully as before in the belief that the Ganges is a god, after he has consented meekly to flow in the channel which the heretical English have made, and that, too, although a hundred bare-footed Brahmins besought the deity in long and vehement prayers to stand upon his dignity and leave the impious channel dry. The law of gravity and the spades of the navvies combined, were too many for the Brahmins and their god. The mighty and mysterious Gunga, under the application of human skill, is silently accomplishing its Maker's purpose in the earth, all heedless of the dark superstitions which have for ages flourished on its brim. Thus a right understanding and use of God's works may open up a way for the spread of his word; the living water may yet flow over India in the wake of that beneficent material stream.

As these rivulets are led by human art so that they refresh and fertilize the land which would remain barren if left to itself, so the Maker and Manager of the world guides prolific human lives, checking their tendency to flow in one direction, and leading them into another, so that the whole space of society may be thereby interpenetrated and refreshed. "Ye are the salt of the earth," said the Lord to His own disciples. "Ye are the irrigators of a parched world," is the motto hung up by an overruling Providence over the life-course of the great and good.

2 Rivers are turned aside by human art with a view to the generation of mechanical power. A comparatively small

stream flows through a narrow valley at some places over rocky falls, and at others through level meadows. As you trace its course downward from the hills, you discover that ere it has emerged from the higher ground into the plain, an artificial barrier has been thrown across its bed in the form of a massive stone wall. The proud young river, like a colt not yet inured to the bridle, frets and foams wildly against the intruder; but after a world of noisy opposition, is subdued, and compelled to turn aside tamed, and flow along silently in a canal that has been prepared for its reception. After it has marched about half-a-mile in its high-level bed, it is poured out all suddenly upon a huge mill-wheel. This wheel driven by its steady pressure, goes busily, steadily round, and carries round with itself the many thousand cards and spindles of the neighbouring factory. The stream has been caught when it was running wild, and yoked to useful industry. Man, the lord of creation, had need of the river's service in his warfare, and impressed it into his service accordingly. Foaming and hissing and spluttering, the weary water is dismissed from its labour, and permitted to go free again. Like a prisoner recently liberated from the treadmill, it greatly rejoices in its newly gotten freedom. It rushes back into its natural bed, thinking it is now its own master again, and determined that henceforth it will take its own way. But, lo, ere it has flowed many paces, it is again intercepted, and compelled to labour at another factory farther down the valley on the other side. This process continues; as soon as the stalwart worker is released from one task, he is caught again and harnessed to another; nor does he cease to toil until he is lost to view in the ocean.

As man turns these rivers, God turns and employs for his own purposes the stream of a human life. In youth the volume of living thought and passion gushes forth like water from a lake among the mountains at a river's birth.

Onward the young life bounds, leaping from rock to rock, laughing and sparkling in the sun. He seems happy, lordly, and free. He is his own master, and determined to have his own way. But, suddenly, a strong wall is thrown across the impetuous torrent by an unseen hand. The king's heart resists and resents the interference in a kingly way: it dashes itself against events as the river dashes itself against the rocks, and with the same result. It is soon subdued. It must yield, for the hand of God is there. The life that was bent on its own self-pleasing course is arrested and turned aside into a path which the man himself would not have chosen. But, probably, ere he has travelled far on the path into which the mighty folding gates of Providence have shut him, he will find that all his force and faculties have been diverted from a channel in which they were useless, and sent full tilt upon some great and necessary work—some work that is glory to God in the highest, and beneficent to brother men on earth. This work, if he had been allowed to take his own way, he would certainly have missed. The turning of the river is the doing of the Lord, and it is marvellous in his eyes. I mention one case which came under my own observation. A young man in Canada, finding himself far from home, and counting sermons dull, arranged with some companions to enjoy a boating excursion on the next Lord's day. Before the appointed time a tree that workmen were felling in the forest fell on him and broke his leg. When the day came he lay on his bed in pain; his companions launched their boat on the lake, and were all drowned. When the young man rose from his bed his life flowed in another direction; the king's heart had been turned by the hand of the Lord as a river of water. He is at this day a minister of the Gospel. But it is not necessary to give examples. All history consists of examples. Every one of us is a monument of the fact. Who of us have all

our days been permitted, like a river on a desert continent, to run our course after the desire of our own hearts? Useful lives are like useful rivers; they have been turned aside from the path which they would have chosen for themselves, and led by Divine wisdom and grace, into a path on which they may serve the Lord and bless the world.

II. The turning of a river may be understood to mean the complete arrestment of its course, and the complete reversal of its current. To turn the river thus is beyond the power of man, and competent only to the Creator. Two distinct species of this thorough turning occur in nature, each graphically symbolizing a corresponding fact in the economy of grace.

1. Rivers, after they have triumphantly overcome all the barriers that attempted to obstruct them in the earlier part of their course, are met and turned back by superior power when they have almost reached their goal. Stand on the bank of a great river not far from its point of issue in the ocean, and ask yourself the question, "Can any power known in nature throw a bar across that river's bed, and force it to flow back? You answer, "No: that deep, broad, rapid volume will run its race out, like a strong man, in spite of all that earth or sky can do to arrest it." Such is your first thought; but as you stand meditating on that strong man's strength, another stronger than he comes up, and in your sight combats, overcomes, and puts him to flight. The tide is rising. The river seems to grow angry, and chafe proudly against the bold assailant, as the champion of the Philistines scorned the Hebrew stripling. But after a short struggle, marked by a line of white breakers stretching from shore to shore, the ocean's tidal wave thoroughly defeats the concentrated forces of the inland waters, and chases the conquered enemy it may be a hundred miles along the same channel in which an hour before he had coursed right proudly down.

Thus a river of water is turned back by one that is mightier than itself, although it were the Mississippi or the Amazon.

Some characteristic features of this turning are eminently noteworthy for the sake of their bearing on an analogous turning of the king's heart. These three features distinguish the turning of a river which is effected by the tide: (1.) it is accomplished by the rude collision of the stronger with the strong,—the stern necessity of yielding to superior power; (2.) it is not accompanied by any purifying effect; it is a turning of the stream, but not a cleansing of the water; (3.) it is not permanent; the river when released from the pressure of the tide rolls down again with all its former velocity, and more.

Such a turning,—such both in its reality and its defects, is often produced in human hearts and lives by the Providence and the Spirit of God. When the law meets a sinner in his course of vanity or vice,—the law with the judgment-seat looming darkly behind it, the man, confronted in conscience with the righteous Judge, is brought to a stand and put to flight. But the turning of heart which is effected by the terror of the Lord is like the turning of the river by the tide. It is indeed real, and for the time complete: the conscience is overwhelmed by the presence of God, and driven back upon itself in dismay. But the same defects adhere to this turning, as those which we detected in its material analogue. It is a yielding angrily and discontentedly to an irresistible power: there is no softness,—no sweetness in the act. Again, the heart so turned is terrified, not purified. He who in his career of wickedness only falls back before the judgment-seat, and renounces his pleasures from fear of retribution, is not a whit more holy than when he followed without restraint the desires of his own heart. Once more, a man so turned, soon recovers from his fright, and not being changed in character, flows as rapidly as before in the old

course and under the old law, as soon as the pressure is removed.

Felix is the most conspicuous example of this process that history, whether ancient or modern, contains. Righteousness and temperance became, through the apostle's preaching, the two lofty precipitous banks frowning over against each other which shut in the volume of the king's life, so that it could not turn either to the right or to the left. Then in front, between these two walls, and moving right against him, like the tide of ocean coming up the stream, the "judgment to come" was suddenly revealed. This wave, launched prematurely as it were from the deep eternity into the field of time, met the self-indulgent Roman full in the face, and overwhelmed him. The terrors of the Lord covered his soul. His jovial resolutions to live fast and free were quenched in a moment by the immediate apprehension of Divine anger. His heart was feeble before the great white throne, as the river is feeble before the tide of ocean.

But the man thus turned, was not in the turning changed. He was as impure when he fled trembling from the preacher of righteousness, as when he threw the bridle loose on the neck of passion and permitted it to carry him whithersoever it would. Moreover, the stream that is in this manner driven upward, soon begins to flow down again; memorably and manifestly was this the experience of Felix. The king's heart, like the river of water, soon recovered itself and came coursing down its natural channel, fouler and fiercer than before. He attempted to sell justice for a bribe, and kept the innocent in prison for popularity. This is all that terrors, even when they glance from the judgment seat of God,—all that terrors can do for a human heart that has not been reconciled through the Redeemer, and renewed by the Spirit. The trembling is not conversion; these are not the pains that accompany the new birth.

2. But there remains another turning for the river, and another turning for the king's heart,—a turning soft, purifying, permanent. Look to the last and most perfect turning of the river, that it may become a mirror in which we shall behold the conversion of the man.

The river of water that could not in any other way be turned, is turned at last by being drawn up into the sky. The sun bears down upon the water which the river is bringing or has brought to the sea, and lifts it out. As much water as all the rivers pour into the ocean every year, is drawn out again by the sun's heat, and sent floating through the air. This is the true, final, thorough, turning of a river.

I caught nature once in the very act of cloud-making. Detained two days at an old town in a Swiss valley, I had no other employment than to climb the mountains on one side, and gaze at the mountains on the other. A huge basin on the summit was full of ice and snow, and the sun of September beamed down mightily on the accumulated mass. Up from the caldron rose a small column of pure white mist, and clung outspreading like a rose on its stalk, until a puff of wind came past, and carried the bundle of the manufactured article away, through the sky, to a large bank of cloud that was lying in the neighbourhood. The process was repeated every ten minutes, and as each portion of cloud was turned out of the factory, it was sent away to the store. A similar scene is annually exhibited in the hills at the washing of the sheep. One by one, as they are washed, the sheep are let go: from a distance you descry small white woolly tufts, like cloudlets, bounding away from the washer's hand, and joining the main flock that stand compact in the neighbouring pasture.

Note some of its leading features.

(1.) In this turning, the water is not driven by the rude impact of a body mightier than itself, but gently, silently

drawn up to heaven by the shining of the sun. There is a parallel distinction between the driving of Felix for a moment from his pleasures by terror, and the winning of Lydia's heart permanently heavenward by the attraction of the Saviour's love. The love that wins is as great a power as the terror that alarms; but its might is disguised in its gentleness. When we gaze on a shaggy, riven, scorched mountain range, when we think of its height and its hardness, we labour painfully under the effort to conceive of the power that must have been put forth to heave that mountain so far upward into the sky; but a greater power is constantly acting before our eyes to-day, raising a greater weight of matter to a sublimer height in heaven. The power that elevates those fleecy clouds which soar above the mountain-top is greater than the power that raised the mountain from the plain. Its vastness is concealed beneath its softness and its silence. Thus the love that radiated from bethelhem penetrated farther and exerted a greater force than the lightnings and thunders that made Sinai shake. Omnipotence was softened, but not weakened, by appearing as a babe in Bethlehem. As the attraction of gravity is the greatest power in nature; love is the greatest power in the world of spirits. "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him."

(2.) The turning of a river by evaporation is distinguished from the turning that is due to the tide, by the purifying that accompanies the power. The stream that is forced up the channel by the tidal wave retains all its filthiness: the water that exhales upward to heaven is pure as the heaven to which it rises. Such is the difference also, between convictions in the conscience through fear of judgment, and the renewing of the heart by the power of redeeming love. The dread of punishment has no power to cleanse: the storm may violently agitate the king's heart, but the commotion

only stirs the corruption that lay at the bottom, and spreads it. It is when the king's heart is drawn up toward heaven that its impurities are left behind. He "that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

(3.) The process is secret and insensible. You may stand beside it, and not suspect that it is going on. There is no flourish of trumpets when a river of water is drawn upward to the sky, and sent away back, more quickly than it came, it may be to the same mountain range in which it had its rise. As softly and silently as dew falls on the grass, the rivers rise to the sky. There are, indeed, exceptions to the rule. Here and there a river, rising in a waterspout, is seen and celebrated as a wonder. But for one that is thus publicly and violently turned, twenty are turned in the form of invisible incense ascending to heaven. A similar rule with similar exceptions obtains in the matter of turning the king's heart. It is not, Lo! here, or lo! there; the kingdom of God cometh not with observation; the kingdom is within you. It delights to enter the closet and shut the door, and ascend in secret to the Father. Sometimes the turning becomes public and visible; great commotions accompany the revival, and the spirits of men are drawn up in conversion, like Elijah in a chariot of fire, while many spectators gaze with wonder on the prodigy. This is a true turning; but it is more exceptional and rare. Births are not wont to obtrude themselves on the gaze of the world.

(4.) In the hand of the Lord are those rivers of water, when they have been lifted up to heaven, and He turneth them whithersoever He will. Expressly the winds are the Creator's messengers or angels. By these He turns the elevated waters in whatever direction He will; the messengers lead the obedient waters to the place where the Lord hath need of them. Rivers flow over our heads, as great as those that flow by our feet on the ground. These aërial streams, unlike

the terrestrial, are turned by every breath that comes from heaven,—now east, now west, now south, now north, their mighty current rolls obedient, wherever their Maker's messengers lead the way.

The wind is a fixed and obvious type of the Holy Spirit. As the waters that have been drawn upwards turn obediently at every breath that blows, so human hearts that have been won upward by their Saviour's love are led by the Spirit, and the whole volume of the life runs swiftly on the errands of the Lord.

(5.) Beneficent to earth, as well as obedient to God, are the upraised waters. Such also are the king's heart and life when they, too, have been sublimated through the secret meteorology of grace. As the elevated purified waters pour themselves down where they are needed, to refresh the thirsty ground, so godly human lives are ever hovering about ready to be precipitated on the spiritual desert, that, refreshed by their efforts, it may begin to rejoice and blossom like the rose.

We have been insensibly led by our theme into a region of mysterious sublimity. Chasing our analogy, absorbed in the pursuit, we have been led further forward and deeper into the Divine mysteries than we intended when we set out; but as we have followed the course of our river thus far, we must accept and bear away the last lessons that it preaches, ere it pours itself out and loses its identity in the infinite of the ocean.

The wind bears down and beats upon the water that lies in the river or the sea, as well as on the water that floats, changed and purified, in the sky: but how different the results! The pressure of the wind on the unchanged water may stir it into destructive rage, but cannot prevail to check its progress or change its course; whereas the slightest breath that blows bears the white translated waters away,

straight and quick as the flight of birds to the spot where they may become God's instruments in blessing a needy world. Thus, human consciences lying open heavenward, but cleaving spiritually to the dust, are visited from time to time with strong breathings of the convincing Spirit; but though they feel the Spirit's striving, they are not led by the Spirit. They rage against the power that presses them. Thus, the wicked are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest. Though greatly tossed by terrors, they remain where they were—they remain what they were. The king's heart is like the rivers of water; it is when it has been drawn upwards, that it can be wafted away, and employed in labours of love.

Gently press the metaphor yet once more, and it will yield still another thought. These two turnings of the river are due respectively to two heavenly bodies, that draw the water mightily, but on different principles, upward. The tide is due to the moon's attraction, and the evaporation of clouds to the sun's heat. The power of the secondary and subordinate heavenly orb produces that turning of the river which is violent, angry, transient, and not purifying; the power of the supreme heavenly orb causes that turning of the river, which is gentle, soft, purifying, and permanent. Behold the difference between the moral effects produced on the conscience and life of man, by superstitious submission to secondary subordinate mediators on the one hand, and the effect produced on the other by surrendering in the simplicity of faith to the Sun of righteousness, the Saviour of the world. Subject a human soul to God, the subjection will elevate and purify; subject a human soul to surbordinate creatures, the subjection will degrade and defile.

I delight to keep company with rivers; they are always pleasant companions, whether for the time they happen to be in a solemn meditative, or a gay and frisky mood: for

rivers, like men, are liable to many variations of temperament. Some are everywhere and always more grave, and some are constitutionally more lively. In the same specimen, as a general rule, you may expect more vivacity in the period of youth, more depth and steadiness in riper years; but here too numerous exceptions occur. You may find here and there a river or a life that retains, when near the end of its course, all the playfulness of youth; and you may also, on the other hand, meet a river or a life that even in early youth exhibits a preternatural tendency to philosophic calmness. On the whole, you could not fall in with a more pleasant or a more profitable companion than a river when you are permitted to enjoy a ramble in the country. The river will walk by your side, and hum you a tune to soothe your spirit if it is ruffled, or dance to amuse you like the lambs in the neighbouring field.

Rivers teach us many lessons; permit me to repeat a lesson that a river once gave to me. The Swiss canton of Valais, like most of the Swiss cantons, consists of a long narrow valley between two lofty mountain ridges, with a river growing bigger and bigger as it advances, flowing now nearer this, and now nearer that side of its limited racecourse. At last the river pours itself suddenly into the Lake Leman, and so disappears. Before it reaches the Lake it has become alarmingly frothy and muddy and noisy,—a river run wild, and at some seasons run mad. What with occasional overflowings through the melting of the snow on the mountains, and what with hard rubbing on the ground, and what with headlong tumbling over rocks, the young river has become very much excited. He comes reeling zig-zag, foul and frothful, down the valley like a drunken man, and leaps headlong into the lake.

You have been kept on the rack for the last ten miles as you travelled in his company. You were sometimes anxious

lest the fast youth should do harm to himself or you. When he at last plunges into the placid lake, and becomes placid too, you are relieved; a load is lifted off your heart; you breathe freely again and resume your journey, secretly glad that the impetuous turbid youth is no longer marching by your side. He has wholly disappeared from view, and you are on the instant introduced to another and more sedate companion. You travel now along the bank of the Leman, taking note of hoary storied castles rising from the surface of the water, and steepled cities hanging on its higher banks. The shadows of the Savoyard mountains, with their waterfalls and chalets, beam with more than earthly beauty from the placid water near its southern shore. You reach at length the lower extremity of the spacious lake, and there soon find yourself fixed like a statue on the middle of the long low bridge that joins the right and left of Geneva into one compact city. You stand like one entranced, gazing not on the azure heavens above your head, but on the azure waters under your feet. You are arrested, and in a sense fascinated by the sight that meets your eye. A broad deep river is gushing from the lake; it is deep, but you can see the bottom, for the water is at once pure and unruffled. The river is very pure and very blue; you have never seen such heavenlike blue before, except in heaven. As you gaze on the vast volume of living water issuing from the lake, you ask a bystander, What river is this? "The Rhone," he replies. The Rhone? The river that I saw some hours ago flowing into the lake so passionate and so impure? The same; but the young river was arrested as he ran, and turned aside, and shut up within the gates and bars of those mountains; was imprisoned in silence and solitude a while. In that retirement the river was changed, and here it issues a new creature, clad in the very hues of heaven to tread its allotted path on earth.

These things are an allegory; for the same Almighty Ruler who directed the path of Israel so that their footsteps on the way from Egypt to Canaan show the wanderings and struggles, the defeats and the victories of the spiritual life,—that same Lord has spread out this beautiful world, making its mountains rise and its rivers run, so as to afford glimpses as in a mirror of man's deeper life and man's eternal destiny. I have seen a young life flowing proud and self-pleasing, flowing as fast and as foul as the upper Rhone, reckless of all save its own wild will. But I have seen that life arrested by God's own hand, and shut up, imprisoned, and silenced as completely as the young Rhone in the Lake Leman. The youth was laid aside from busy life, and shut up in depths. His light was extinguished and his strength undermined. He lay upon a bed of pain and sickness; he was still. Be still,—it seemed a whisper from heaven in his ear; "Be still, and know that I am God." In the stillness he learned to know the Saviour of sinners. Peace entered his heart; impurities sank away from his life. He became at once placid and pure. At length it pleased God to open his prison-door and send him forth on the world again. Forth he bounds at his Lord's command to run the remainder of his race rejoicing—a new creature, a converted man.

A useful course will that river run on earth, and a blessed uplifting into heaven will be vouchsafed to that river when its course on earth is run.

Wilberforce:

HIS LIFE, WORK, AND FELLOW-WORKMEN.

A LECTURE

BY

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WILBERFORCE, HIS LIFE, WORK, AND FELLOW-WORKMEN.

On Saturday, August 3rd, 1833, there was a sight in London which, if a man had leisure, he would have turned aside to see. Starting from Temple Bar, and taking a course westward, almost every third person met in the Strand was dressed in mourning. If he wended his way through Parliament-street towards Westminster Abbey, he had to press through a vast crowd, whose voices were unwontedly hushed, as by a common trouble. Presently, there appeared a funeral procession, whose line of carriages seemed as if it would have no end. If he entered the fine old Abbey, he would find it thronged with people, many of them of noble birth, but all wearing some garment of sorrow. As the coffin was borne in, he might trace among the pall-bearers the Speaker of the House of Commons, the Lord High Chancellor, and one of the Princes of the blood. He would see among the mourners at that funeral Members of both Houses of Parliament, Bishops of the Church, Ministers of the State, the chiefs of the Law and of the Army, at least three Peers of the realm who had been first Lords of the Treasury, and those marvellous brothers Wellesley—the one as great in diplomacy as the other in arms;—and all these, the highest in rank, the

most renowned in fame, had asked to be permitted thus to honour the memory of the dead. After the body had been lowered to its resting-place in the north transept, he would learn, if he gazed around him, that it was laid amidst glorious dust, for the tablets hard by are inscribed with some of the greatest names of England,—Chatham, Mansfield, Pitt, Fox, Canning.

Impressed by all he saw, a stranger would naturally ask, who is it whom the nation thus delighteth to honour? Knowing that this is a country in which rank is a heritage, it might be supposed that he was some child of a noble house, who had added to the honours of birth the claims of personal service. But a glance upon the plate of the coffin would have shown an untitled name, and a search into the records of the family would have discovered no ennobled ancestor. Then he was a soldier, surely, who had fought his country's battles, and had won his right to her sorrow by the sword which he had wielded in her cause. No—he was never trained to arms, and if he had triumphs, they were those of mercy, not of blood. Then he was a statesman, in whose wisdom the Crown had trusted, who had made the name of his country to be feared abroad, or who had guided her government at home. Nay, he never held an office, he spoke with no official authority, he was no blind follower of any government, through the whole of his public life his conscience was his only leader; and for eight years, quite long enough for a politician to be forgotten, he had withdrawn from the strife altogether. These things would but increase the stranger's wonder. That a private gentleman should be honoured with a public funeral—one who was no Minister of State, not renowned in arms, and who bore the same name from his christening to his burial, and that the mention of that name, William Wilberforce, should be deemed sufficient to explain it, these facts would justify the inquiry

which would rise to his lips, and which it is my purpose for your benefit to enter upon to-night. And as the story of his life is told, the great lessons taught at every step of it will be that, while wealth can bribe, and talent dazzle, and bravery awe, and power command, goodness lives; and that by embodying in the life those two commandments of God "upon which hang all the law and the prophets," it was said of Wilberforce, in words whose filial piety was but sober truth, "For departed kings there are appointed honours, and the wealthy have their gorgeous obsequies; it was his nobler portion to clothe a people with spontaneous mourning, and to go down to the grave amid the benedictions of the poor."

William Wilberforce was born in Hull on the 24th August, 1759. He was the third child of his parents, but their only son. The township of Wilberfoss, eight miles from York, gave a name to the family. The grandfather of Wilberforce, who altered the spelling of the name, was a Baltic merchant of good repute in Hull, and his father was, later, a partner in the firm. The quaint old house in which he was born stands back from the High-street—now the place where merchants most do congregate, but which was then filled with the dwellings of the wealthy. Of the early years of Wilberforce little is known. He was of small stature, feeble frame, and weak eyes—one of those delicate children who, among savage tribes, would have been thrown into the river; and who, in the rough days of our ancestors, would have been killed by cruel care. His father's death, when he was nine years of age, transferred him to the care of an uncle at Wimbledon, and in St. James's Place. Here he was sent to a school which seems to have been a sort of Dotheboys' Hall; not, however, in Yorkshire, but in London. He describes it as a place where they "taught everything and nothing," and his most lasting impressions were of the "nauseous food which they ate, and of the red

beard of an usher, who scarcely shaved once a month." Although he got at this time small store of learning, the home influence of his uncle's house was unconsciously working out his higher education. His aunt had been brought into connexion with some of the early Methodists, and from their conversations he became serious and prayerful, a student of the Scripture, and impressed with the importance of a godly life. He said, in after life, that these views of his youth agreed, in the main, with his matured thoughts upon religion. The reproach of Methodism, however, was in those days a formidable thing, and as the rumours of his seriousness reached Hull, his friends became alarmed, and his mother was despatched with all speed to London, to remove him from such dangerous guardianship. With a shrewd knowledge of human nature, his grandfather put the case before him as a matter of profit and loss. The grand tour was at that time a selecter privilege than at present, and the command of money was as enviable then as now. Hence the force of the argument: "Billy shall travel with Milner as soon as he is of age, but if he turns Methodist, he shall not have a sixpence of mine." This bitter opposition, and the natural charm of worldly society, weaned him in time from his religious desires, and for some years his life was a round of gaiety at home, and a protracted idleness at school. When seventeen years old, he entered St. John's College, Cambridge, a youth of ample fortune, quick wit, generous disposition, and agreeable manners—all sources of strong temptation in the new society into which he was thrown. He describes the morals of the set to which he was first introduced as being loose in the extreme, and even when he had become "the centre of a higher circle," he says that the object of every one around him seems to have been to make and keep him idle. "Why in the world," said they, "should a man of your fortune trouble himself with fagging?"

He almost entirely neglected mathematical studies, and was told that he was too clever to require them. His love for the classics was intense, and when he acquitted himself well in the College Examinations, it was said in his hearing by some tutor with the soul of a tuft-hunter, "that his companions were mere saps, but that he did all by talent." Thus surrounded by evil influences and flattering friends, it is matter of surprise and gratitude that his morals escaped the contagion, and that his mind was in any wise furnished for his future life. Though thoughtless, he was never dissolute, and though he lacked the accuracy and self-control of the thorough student, he filled his mind with useful and varied knowledge. Before he left college, he formed the purpose to enter upon public life, and with sufficient courage, offered himself as a candidate for his native town while he was yet under age. A premature dissolution of Parliament had nearly proved fatal to his early ambition, but the Session lingered on, and within a month of his twenty-first birthday, he was engaged in an election contest, battling against a coalition which was thought all-powerful, and returned at the head of the poll. It is a curious illustration of the mode in which elections were managed, that, by an established tariff, two guineas were paid for a vote, four guineas for a plumper, and that a voter's expenses from London averaged £10 a piece. Of course our fathers had as holy a horror of the penalties of bribery as we have, and therefore the money was not considered due until the fifteenth day after the meeting of Parliament, being the last day on which petitions could be presented complaining of an undue return. Moreover, there was a certain class of Hull freemen dwelling on the banks of the Thames, whose love inclined rather to eating than to eloquence; these he propitiated with hot suppers in the various public-houses of Wapping. He did not disdain also to avail himself of muscular aid. An

athletic butcher, well-known in the town, was enlisted as an ally. Wilberforce's pride took alarm at the idea of buying the man's help by those small flatteries which often bribe the men who are too sturdy to accept of money, but his scruples were silenced by one of his staunch supporters. "Oh Sir! but he's a fine fellow if you come to bruising.' Altogether, his first election cost him nearly £9,000, or something above £8 each for every vote which was polled. With his after principles, there was nothing which he more condemned than this disgraceful traffic, by which men put up their consciences to auction, and place their manhood in the market to be purchased by the highest bidder.

Thus elected into Parliament, he became at once a favourite in society, and absorbed by the twin pursuits of politics and pleasure. There were few in that age who did not gamble, and he was in danger of being snared by the fascinations of the faro table. His deliverance from the evil habit was effected in a way so singular, that it deserves to be recorded, though I gravely doubt its use as a cure for other cases of the kind. Most men are sickened of the gaming table by their losses. He left it, because on one particular night he won £600. The thought that men of straitened means, or portionless younger sons, might be crippled by his gains, preyed upon his sensitive spirit, and he resolved to play no more, that he might be free from the blood-guiltiness of adding to the list of victims, whom gambling has hurled from wealth to beggary, and from happiness to suicide.

While at Cambridge, he had formed an acquaintance with William Pitt, which now ripened into intimacy, and in spite of occasional differences, the intimacy lasted until Pitt's untimely death. They often spent their leisure in company, and the glee was sometimes frolicsome when each young Atlas threw off the world which he was daily bearing. They went down into Dorsetshire for shooting, and it is said that

Wilberforce had well nigh quenched the hopes of a nation by bringing down a Pitt instead of a partridge. Their first journey abroad was undertaken together, and after some strange adventures, they were welcomed at the Court of Fontainebleau. Wilberforce was most impressed during their brief tour by the position of the celebrated Lafayette. One of the old noblesse, and the heir to a large fortune, he had served as a volunteer in the war of American independence, and had just returned to France with the thanks of Congress and the laurels of war. He lived with republican strictness in the midst of the voluptuous court, and spoke with contemptuous freedom of the follies of the old regime. And yet he was treated with extreme deference, and though his presence at the Court of the Bourbons was as if a sturdy Ironside of Cromwell's army had sat down to banquet with a troop of Cavaliers, not a tongue spoke to his discredit, and he had established for himself a position and a name. He was in fact the shadow of the coming time—the political petrel significant of the rising storm.

It is not unlikely that what Wilberforce saw and heard in connexion with this remarkable man took effect upon his future action. He would see in him a standing proof that the days of feudalism were gone, that there was a class between knight and serf which had gradually climbed to power, that there was a majesty of the people which might not be safely disregarded even by the majesty of the king. He would see that a strong, resolute, earnest manhood of the middle class had risen among the nations, linked to the present by interest and affection, looking to the future in enterprise and hope—acting as a sort of breakwater between the rock of patrician prejudice and the billows of popular fury—moderate in counsel, and practical in working—and thus claiming to be an element in national administration, and a sinew of national strength.

It is certain that whether he was thus led to ponder or not, the great triumph which he shortly achieved, the proudest, though not the greatest, of his political life, was a practical recognition of this new power in the state. Hence, as his "Life" tells us: "As the man of the middle classes, he took his place in public life; as their representative, he was opposed alike to party influence and democratic license, as their representative he demanded and obtained the Abolition of the Slave Trade."

The circumstances which led to the triumph in question—Wilberforce's first election for the great county of York, may be described in few words. In 1782, the good Lord Rockingham died. Lord Shelburne accepted, it is said without consultation with his colleagues, the post of First Lord of the Treasury. Fox, Burke, and others, immediately resigned their offices. Fox seems to have been prompted by personal as well as political bitterness, and in his passion he hurried into the coalition which is the great blot upon his Parliamentary fame—a coalition with a Minister whom not a year ago he had threatened with impeachment—to drive from power a Minister who had but lately been his own colleague, and with whom on most points he heartily agreed. The country felt that compromises like this were hollow and worthless, and struck at the roots of all political morality. The King, who was a good hater, hated Fox and his party, and through the land there smouldered a discontent, which, when Fox proposed his India Bill, burst at once into a flame. Addresses condemning the coalition, were adopted in many parts of the country. But Yorkshire had not yet spoken. The great houses of Howard, Cavendish, and Wentworth, were supposed to be too mighty to be opposed, and it was with hesitancy and fear that a county meeting was called. Late in the day, when the address had been moved, and the answers given, and the people were getting weary, Wilber-

force mounted the table, and by the magic of his eloquence, enchained them for upwards of an hour. The storm pelted upon them, and the crowd were tired, but the address was carried with enthusiasm. "I saw a shrimp mount upon the table," said Boswell to Dundas, "but as I listened it grew and grew, until the shrimp had grown into a whale." The stalwart yeomen and clothiers, who, like Cowper's honest man, wore "Broad cloth without, and a warm heart within," were delighted above measure. "This is the man for us," spread rapidly from lip to lip. "Wilberforce and liberty" became the rallying cry of the party. Lord Mulgrave spoke of him as "the bosom-friend of the Minister, and second only to him in eloquence unexampled at their years." The opposition ventured only to the nomination, and retired before the poll; and at 25 years of age he—the son of a merchant, with no aristocratic connection, with no train of tenantry, had borne down the powerful houses which had for years held the county in their hands—and by his personal ability alone, had become, without a contest, Knight of the Shire which had the largest constituency in the realm.

This was the highest elevation, considering him merely as a politician, which he ever reached, and his life might have been a series of such triumphs, alternating, like the lives of other statesmen, with mortifying failures, but for an event which laid hold of his inner soul, and at once changed and ennobled every purpose of his being. That event was the re-awakening of his thoughts about religion, and his decisive consecration to God. On his twenty-fifth birthday he was in complete prosperity and success. His position established, his fortune ample—caressed by the great, and popular with the multitude, of winning manners and eloquent speech, with an ambition large but not larger than his warrant, with a keen relish for life, with a fund of that sparkling small-talk which is the conversational currency of society,

and with no shadow, either upon his family, spirits, or health —this world had no greener garlands with which to crown him, and he "withheld not his heart from any joy." But there was a higher life awaiting him. After the prorogation, he set off for a tour to the continent, choosing Isaac Milner, afterwards Dean of Carlisle, as his travelling companion. Just before he started, his eye glanced casually upon a little book, "Doddridge's Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul." "What is that?" he asked. "One of the best books ever written," was the reply of Milner, "let us take it with us, and read it on the journey." The reading of that book led him to the study of the Bible, and the study of the Bible was blessed by the Divine Spirit to the enlightenment of his mind, and to the renewal of his heart. It was not in his nature to be either rash in forming his convictions, or cowardly in hiding them when they had once taken possession of his soul. In the beginning of his religious course, however, he felt it a great struggle before he could unburden his mind. There then lived in Coleman-street Buildings a wise and kind old man, out of whose heart Christ's love had burned all savage and carnal passion, and who lived only that he might tell others of the grace which had rescued him from profanity almost without a parallel. The shrewd sailor's wisdom gleamed out in many an arch turn of words, but of all thresholds in that great London thoroughfare, there was none oftener trodden by strangers than that of good John Newton, a household name in those days for men who wished counsel and healing for souls. To him, after many misgivings, Wilberforce applied, binding him to let no one living know of the application or of the visit until he was released from the obligation.

Are any of you disposed to blame this secrecy, and to vaunt your own superior courage? Think you, that with such convictions you would have run all hazards, that without an effort

you would have conquered shame and banished fear, and that you would not have paid the Saviour so ill a compliment as to come to him by night like the Nicodemus whom you call a coward? It would be well for you, before you brand the ruler with cowardice, to ask yourselves whether, with his hindrances, you would have ventured to Jesus at all. The faith, thus timid at the onset, was the strongest in the hour of need. The comer by night, the secret disciple, and two brave women, were the only mourners at the burial, when those who had publicly followed him were affrighted by the first shock of danger, and, with craven impulse, forsook him and fled. It is Faith, not daring, which is the stuff of which martyrs are made, and the most sensitive natures, natures which have quivered like an aspen at the threatening of trouble, have been enbraved into the very heroism of sacrifice when the trial came. It was so in the case of Wilberforce in the matter of his religious decision. Timid as a child in the outset of his enquiries, he became valiant as a confessor when the truth came home to him in power. In the fearlessness with which on all occasions, and in all companies, he bore the reproach of Christ there was a display, such as is rarely met with, of grandest moral courage. It was no easy thing to be a Christian in those times, and in the higher ranks of life. Although the Great Reformation had roused among the masses an earnest religious feeling, "not many noble" had embraced the truth. The educated classes largely associated fervour with fanaticism, and a devout feeling with a narrow mind. It was considered a breach of politeness to be careful about the religion of others, and that a man should acknowledge his own was to make himself the scoff of the profane, and to excite in polished circles a look of well-bred wonder. Now it was in this state of society, when the persecution of the gibe and banter, keener for the spirit's wounding than the persecution of the sword, prevailed on

every hand, that Wilberforce made his decision, withdrew his name from all the clubs to which he had been admitted, avowed the change of his feeling to his political associates, ran the gauntlet of genteel regret and of rebellious scorn, and withstood even those dearer pleadings, which had warped him from religion before. The choice was made, moreover, in the early prime of manhood, made neither by a hermit who had never tasted life's cup of pleasure, nor by a sated worldling, in whose mouth it had turned to ashes. With the accidents of birth and station in his favour, with youth upon his side, fortune at his feet, and fame and power within the grasp of his outstretched hand—when life was in its summer, and he was compassed, so to speak, with its gladness, and music, and flowers—with everything at hand which it is deemed the most costly to surrender—he stepped forth in the sight of the world, for which his name had already a charm, took the crown of his manliness, and cast it humbly at the feet of Christ. I can see in the act a courage of that sort which is the truest and rarest, but which is, notwithstanding, within the reach of you all. The true idea of Power is not embodied in Hercules or Samson, brute forces with brute appetites, takers of strong cities, but slaves to their own Passion. Nor is it in the brave soldier who can storm a fortress at the point of the bayonet, but who yields his manhood to the enticements of sinners, and hides the faith which the scoffer's sneer has made him frightened to avow. The real power is there, when a man has mastered himself, when he has trampled upon the craven and the shameful in all their disguises, and when, ready on all fit occasions to bear himself worthily among his fellows, and "give the world assurance of a man," he dares to say to that world, the while it scorns and slanders him, "I will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up."

Wilberforce returned to his parliamentary duties with higher principles than either ambition or patriotism could furnish, "prepared by the fear and love of God to become the champion of the liberties of man." The House of Commons was then in its Augustan age of eloquence, and night after night the walls echoed to strains of argument, or invective, or appeal, whose memories are inspirations still. Shall we take our seats, as in the gallery, and look at some of the famous ones as they wrestle below?

There are two central figures, both commoners to the last, although cadets of noble houses,

> "Beneath whose banners proud to stand,
> Look up the noblest of the land,
> Till through the British world are known
> The names of Pitt and Fox alone."

It is sometimes a disadvantage to a man to have had an illustrious father, for the father's name is as a shadow out of whose luminous darkness the son finds it difficult to emerge The memory of Chatham was otherwise to *William Pitt*. It was the inspiration of his genius, and his introduction to the sphere in which, of all others, he was the most fitted to shine. Of slight frame, and of such feeble health that he was never trusted at a public school— his mind grew into an early, but not unhealthy ripeness, and he had mastered some of the most difficult classics before he came of age. He passed through his college course with cold regularity, making no friends, but laying in great store of learning, and in the autumn of the year in which he attained his majority, he startled the scarlet-robed Doctors of the University by offering to represent them in Parliament. They resented his presumption by placing him at the foot of the poll—but a seat was found for the young aspirant in the borough of Appleby. His first speech secured his fame, and it is said that during the whole of his career he scarcely

added a cubit to his oratorical stature. "He is not a chip of the old block," said Burke, with tears in his eyes, "he is the old block itself." "He will be one of the first men in Parliament," said some one to Fox; "He is so already," was the generous reply. This reputation was won neither by variety of style nor grace of manner, neither by brilliant speech nor happy illustration, but by a grand unbroken flow, clear as a river, and as pleasant as the murmur of its waters, and by the dignity with which the majestic words rolled forth as from the lips of a king. His pride, whether it was simple exclusiveness, or the deep consciousness of his own merit, had nothing vulgar about it, but rose into a superb self-confidence which might almost be mistaken for a virtue. Thus, at twenty-two, he declined a lucrative post in Lord Shelburne's ministry, and announced in the House that he would take no office which did not bring him into the cabinet. Thus, in a difficult crisis, when he had to struggle almost single-handed against a powerful opposition, he says, "I place much dependence upon my colleagues, but I place more on myself." At twenty-five years of age he was Prime Minister of England, in a minority in the Commons, but the idol of the people, the mightiest subject in Europe, and influential enough, like the old French mayors of the palace, to have control over the councils of the king. With the love of power as his commanding idolatry, there was no room in his heart for the meaner idols of lust and gold. He was "married only to his country"—but as son, brother, and friend, his affections were warm and pure. Cold and haughty with strangers, there was a Lutheran playfulness where he made himself at home, and a bright humour cleft its way through the strength of his character, like a rill from a mountain's heart. He had a noble scorn of money, remained poor while enriching others, declined the offered Garter for which dukes were struggling, made lords by the score, but continued plain

William Pitt to the end, and when £100,000 were offered to free him from embarrassment, by the willing generosity of his friends, said that "no consideration on earth should force him to accept it." There are few measures of benefit which bear his name; and though his opinions were in advance of his age, and he spoke them in long remembered thunder, they either lacked the force of convictions, or he was hindered from carrying them into effect. It were thankless to seek for stains upon so fair a shield. However opinions may differ as to the great minister's policy, there are few who will deny to him the credit of surpassing ability, of sincere love of his country, and of stainless integrity and honour. "The Austerlitz look," as it was called, shadowed his fine countenance during the last months of disaster; the brave heart failed beneath his country's troubles, and at the zenith of his power, if not of his influence,—

> "the stately column broke,
> The beacon-light was quenched in smoke,
> The trumpet's silver sound was still,
> The warder silent on the hill."

But his country has not forgotten him, and so long as there is history, and so long as there are hearts which kindle at great names and deeds—so long the name of William Pitt will live, a national possession and pride.

When Pitt entered Parliament, the greatest debater in the House was acknowledged to be *Charles James Fox*, who led His Majesty's opposition during the long and stormy years of the American war. Of unwieldy person, rendered less comely by excesses, with a shrill voice, and little, and that ungraceful, action, he also was one of those whose claim to marvellous eloquence rests rather upon the tradition of the elders, than upon anything which the present times can read. With an exquisite classical taste, and a subtle knowledge of

history, with a pronunciation singularly beautiful, a pure style, a quick insight into the bearings of a question, and a wit, which could either play harmlessly about a subject, or scathe and scorch an adversary; with a close logical faculty, and a stern justice, which made him state his opponent's arguments so strongly that his friends trembled lest he should not be able to answer them; we need not doubt the tales which charmed listeners tell of Fox's wonderful power. In private he was a fascinating talker, the life of social parties, and a fast and generous friend. "When I have trembled before him," said Curran, "I have caught a smile rippling the fine Atlantic of his countenance." His errors sprang largely from vicious training, and from the evil habits of the time, and neither gambling nor profligacy hardened his kindly heart, nor quenched the intense human sympathies which were in him as a well-spring of life. Vehement, and at times terrible in his sarcasm, he rose far above malice and envy. The prize of power for which he had been long contending, fell at last into a hand which had lost the nerve to grasp it, and after a few months of office he slept by the side of his great rival in the temple of silence and peace. There are few statesmen around whose memory so much affection lingers. He lives as much in hearts as on marble. His fame, which is broad and lasting, rests not upon his ministerial life, but upon his generous temper, his deep love of country, his burning hatred of oppression,—his efforts in the cause of suffering liberty.

"When he, all-eloquent for freedom stood,
With speech resistless as the voice of blood;
The voice that cries thro' all the patriot's veins,
When at his feet his country groans in chains;—
Of power, to bid the storm of passion roll,
Or touch with sweetest tenderness the soul.
But spake in vain till with his latest breath,
He broke the spell of Africa in death."

By the side of these men, though somewhat elder, lived and laboured another, who, in many respects, was greater than either. A young Irishman, the son of a Dublin attorney, came over to seek his fortune in London. He had written himself into notice as a hack of the booksellers, and had got a name at the clubs as the only talker who was fit to rank with Johnson. Lord Rockingham took him as his private secretary, and by his influence the British Parliament was enriched by the presence of *Edmund Burke*. He made his first speech in the House in the debate on which Chatham made his last speech before the glory of the great commoner was hidden beneath the coronet of the earl; and, in the words of Macaulay, "It was a splendid sunset and a splendid dawn." His impeachment of Warren Hastings established his claim to the possession of the highest eloquence, for Hastings himself was so aroused by it that for awhile he believed himself as guilty as his fiery accuser painted him, and it was only when reflection followed upon excitement that the spell of the magician ceased to work its will. In the House, however, he outlived his popularity, and whether from envy, or from honest incapacity, or from his own hot blood and bitter words, he, a greater than his age, and whose greatness is for all time, was coughed down by impatience, and dulness voted him a bore. He was often beyond his audience, and as Goldsmith has it

> "Though equal to all things, for all things unfit,
> Too nice for a statesman, too proud for a wit,
> For a patriot too cool, for a drudge disobedient,
> And too fond of the right to pursue the expedient.
> Too deep for his hearers, he went on refining,
> And thought of convincing, while they thought of dining."

His grasp of great principles, the far-stretching insight of his political vision, the loftiness of his language, and the remote analogies by which his views were sustained, were

not to the taste of those who were absorbed in party strifes, and who fretted for office during their little hour. But he spoke for the future, and the great world listens still. As a writer he could write in many styles, and in all almost equally well. A critic says of his works, that they are "by turns statistics, metaphysics, painting, poetry, eloquence, wit, and wisdom." He was endowed with a union of faculties which are seldom found together, acuteness of mind, and great caution,—an imperial fancy, and a creative genius,—a perseverance which would master every depth and detail, and an imagination whose flight, like the eagle's, was ever toward the sun. In strange variation from the usual order, his imagination was more subdued in his youth than in his age, as if like the cereus, it could bloom only, in its fulness, in the night. His "Letters on a Regicide Peace," are at once the most gorgeous and the most passionate of his works, and though written but a year before his death, they show intense earnestness, and no decay of strength. He wrote as a seer would write to whom his message was a burden, and to whom it was a necessity that his words should be words of fire. The latter days of this great man have a sublimity about them on which it is beautiful and solemn to gaze. His two rivals were smitten down in the heat of strife—he lingered through a season of retirement, during which many were wont to seek his counsel, and Wilberforce says the attention shown to him was like the treatment of Ahithophel of old: "It was as if one went to enquire of an oracle of the Lord." The reverses of political neglect, and the sundering of old friendships befel him His ungovernable temper had created some enemies, and had alienated some friends. He had to struggle with straitened means and failing health. But the brave spirit bore nobly up, until the horror of great darkness fell upon him in the death of his son, upon whom he had lavished all the love of his wealthy heart. This blow shattered

the life which it sublimed. It was as the shadow of the sepulchre. But from out that shadow spake "the old man eloquent" with a tenderness and a power which he could not have gathered before, for the tenderness was of the nearing grave, and the power was of the world unseen. "The storm has gone over me, and I lie like one of those old oaks which the late hurricane has scattered about me. I am stripped of all my honours, I am torn up by the roots, and lie prostrate on the earth. There, and prostrate there, I most unfeignedly recognise the Divine justice, and in some degree submit to it. I am alone. I have none to meet my enemies in the gate; indeed, I greatly deceive myself, if in this hard season I would give a peck of refuse wheat for all that is called fame and honour in the world. I live in an inverted order. They who ought to have succeeded me are gone before me. They who should have been to me as posterity are in the place of ancestors." This is majestic sorrow, mingled with uncomplaining trust. It is the moan of a great heart, like that which the mighty waters make upon the shore, and big, like it, with the hope of a to-morrow. And into that shadow of the sepulchre the light beyond did shine. The thoughts of religion which had never been wholly shaken off, became clear, and bright, and comforting, at last. During the last two days of his life, Wilberforce's book on Practical Christianity was his study, and he expressed the comfort it had given him, and his thanks that such a book had been brought into the world; and there is reason to believe that this man, bright in his time as Orion among the stars of heaven, passed from the world a humble believer in Jesus,

> "And fell, with all his weight of cares,
> Upon the great world's altar stairs,
> Which slope through darkness up to God."

Other names of note, though they attained not to "the first

three," crowd upon the memory, but may only be seen to-night in rapid glimpses of their presence.

There is *Sheridan*, the brilliant and versatile, who exaggerated both the talents and the frailties of his countrymen—the orator to whom the House paid the unparalleled compliment of adjournment at the close of his speech, on the ground that they could not transact business calmly while under so mighty a spell—the wit who made his jokes at home, and let them off with seeming promptness on the first apt occasion, as when he said to the composer of music who had turned wine-merchant, "Then you'll import your music, and compose your wine," or, as when he thundered at Dundas as "the gentleman who resorts to his memory for his jokes, and to his imagination for his facts,"—the gay spendthrift who was about as well acquainted with duns as with dinners, and whose difficulties may be gathered from one of the current stories of the time, that, in a moment of anger, he threatened to cut his son off with a shilling. "Then you must borrow it, father," was the cool reply.

There is *Dundas*, for a long time Pitt's solitary helper against a host of foes, a straightforward business-like speaker, who would not let a man misunderstand him, a man of immense industry and steady friendship, who wielded in Scotland an almost boundless influence, until "Dundas and patronage," became an alliance almost as well understood as crown and covenant.

There is *Windham*, the soldier's friend, a man of elegant scholarship and subtle wit, but too ingenious to be safe, and too violent to be much regarded.

There is *Perceval*, of an energetic nature, and of dauntless courage, a ready speaker, and a high-principled and conscientious, if somewhat narrow statesman, who died by the hand of an assassin too soon for his enduring fame.

There is *Grenville*, bold and honest, tolerant and true-hearted, for whom was reserved the distinction of abolishing

the Slave Trade, and who cheerfully gave up for principle twenty years of power.

There is *Eldon*, a fine example of his own recipe to make a celebrated lawyer, that a man should "live like a hermit, and work like a horse," an able and painstaking servant of the crown, who, if he had lived in Bunyan's days, might have sat for the portrait of the Captain of the Doubters, so full was he of shadowy difficulties in common things, but who, when the peril came could be swift as an eagle, both in device and execution, and who, though parchment puzzled him, knew how to manage men.

There is *Henry Grattan*, the Irish patriot and orator, whose speech sparkled with epigrams, which had principles hidden in their heart; who kept the zealous temperance of words, which is the orator's best weapon, and whose reputation, won in Ireland, did not suffer when the first minds of England were his peers, for he was like a tree which can bear transplanting, and thrives on foreign soil.

There is *Erskine*, a man of noble form and dauntless courage, with a port of graceful pride, and an eye, whose glance prepared the way for his words, as the lightning heralds the thunder. He had a voice of strange sweetness, a mind keen to apprehend, a memory strong to retain, a constant presence of mind, and a thorough knowledge of the human heart, and of the easiest way to reach it. He fulfilled the advocate's noblest duty, and that in critical times. He fought for the liberty of the press, and for the rights of the people, when corruption would have smothered the one, and when cruelty would have strangled the other. The Court, the Parliament, the judges, the demagogue, the infidel, were alike resisted as the cause of his client demanded it, with a fearless eloquence which charmed even those who suffered from it, and he was as independent of his clients themselves, for when Thelwall was dissatisfied with the way in which his

defence was conducted, and sent a written message to Erskine, "I'll be hanged if I don't conduct my own cause;" all the answer he got was the counterpart to his own dry humour, "You'll be hanged if you do."

And not to enlarge a list already too long, there is *George Canning*, last, and not least worthy of the band, an accomplished scholar, a brilliant wit, a skilful if not an impassioned declaimer, the architect of his own fame, who had no cause to blush for the plans he drew; fond of power, but a man of principle, carrying on a keen contest within himself between the rival loves of politics and letters, left, as a statesman, a leader without a party, or at best with a party who coldly followed, while his enemies rancorously assailed him, but as posterity is not slow to acknowledge "just, alike to freedom and the throne." The appreciation which was denied him in life, has since flowed in upon him like a remorseful tide. He lived among men as some rare bird, of whose beauty they knew not, until the parting wing revealed it, for he was just beginning to be understood and valued, when the arrow sped untimely, and the wit and the worth were hidden in the covetous grave.

These were among the men who led the senate, "the hardy Spartans exercised in arms," when Wilberforce took his part in their midst, and began that long and seemingly hopeless struggle against oppression which was henceforward the business of his life. He went among them, renowned though they were, on equal terms. He marched at once to the foremost rank, and kept the place he took, conscious of quiet power. When he supported, his aid was that of a strong arm. When he opposed, even the mightiest, he was "a foeman worthy of their steel."

Animated by the highest motives, the common instincts of right and wrong sharpened into keener discernment, and clothed with more spiritual sensibility, his religion was felt

to be an element of his being, and shone forth from every action of his life, not obtrusively, but with a light both clear and kind.

Very soon after his decision for God, Wilberforce meditated the writing of a tract upon the nature of religion as he now understood it, which might serve as a manifesto of his own principles, and be rendered useful to others. He had a deep conviction that there were few in his own rank of life who had any thought of religion except as a seemly form. He mourned the ungodliness around him, even of those whose moral character was without a stain. He pondered upon these things until the burden was laid upon him to write, and hence sprang his "Practical Christianity." In this book he shows the difference between the Christianity of the New Testament, and that which was current in the fashionable world; traces this difference to a forgetfulness of the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel; shows that faith, working by love the purity of the heart, and the guidance of the life, is the principle of Christian consecration, and urges the devotion of the life to Christ, as the only way in which Christianity could become both a happy experience, and a spiritual force. There was nothing new in these truths. They were in the writings of the Reformers, and in the Articles and Homilies of the Church. They were the same truths which had been carried home to the hearts of the masses from the lips of Wesley and Whitfield. But from the pen of Wilberforce they came to many like a new revelation. He was a layman, so it was not a professional utterance. He lived before the public, so men could judge of the agreement between his creed and his life. The style of the work was interesting, and the illustrations were happy. It was a readable book on religion. The writer was undoubtedly in earnest, and he had written from the heart as well as from the mind. These were conditions of advantage, and although his friends were

anxious about the issue, and the publisher thought the name might possibly justify a venture of 500 copies, the result rebuked their fears; 7,500 were called for within six months of the publication, it passed through fifteen editions in England, and twenty-five in America, was translated into five languages, and it is said that not a year passed during his after life, in which he was not gladdened by the news that some had been led to seriousness, or some wavering faith confirmed, or languid piety quickened by its appeals.

Oh the power, the mysterious but mighty power, by which the labour of one man's life is felt for ages. No work, either of good or evil, ends with itself. It is trite to say that men leave "footprints on the sands of time." Footprints! They do vastly more. They make or mar the generations which follow them. How many have been offered upon the altar of ambition, because Napoleon lived! What numbers have sunk into the lees of sensuality, because Byron sang! How many have been won to goodness by the eloquence of Howard's life! "No man liveth to himself," and a man's light words of to-day may fix the destiny of many who never heard the speaker's name. It is impossible, therefore, to overrate the importance of the conversion of one soul to Christ, or of the hardening of one heart in sin. In both cases you have started a series of influences whose vibrations reach to the farthest land, and to the latest time. See the beautiful train of blessing in the case before us. An old Puritan doctor writes a book more than two hundred years ago, called, "The Bruised Reed," which falls into the hands of Richard Baxter, and leads his penitent spirit to its trust in Christ. Baxter's ministry is like that of a giant in his strength, and when he dies, his "Call to the Unconverted" goes preaching on to thousands to whom Baxter himself had never spoken with human tongue. Philip Doddridge, prepared by his pious mother's teaching, hears this piercing

"Call," devotes the summer of his life to God, and becomes a "burning and a shining light." Doddridge's "Rise and Progress" fell, as we have seen, into the hands of Wilberforce, and led him to thought and to prayer. Wilberforce's "Practical View" cleared the faith and fired the zeal of a clergyman in the sunny south, and he wrote the simple annal of a Methodist girl, which has borne fruit of blessing in every quarter of the globe, for who has not heard of Legh Richmond, and "The Dairyman's Daughter?" And then the same book had a ministry in the bleak north, and in a country parish found out a Scottish clergyman, who was preaching a Gospel which he did not know, and he embraced the fulness of the glad tidings, and came forth a champion for the truth, "furnished in all things and ready," until all Scotland rang with the eloquence of Thomas Chalmers. And what is the moral of all this? Why, that there is not one of you who need live in vain; that, though your sphere be of the humblest, there is some brother-man whom you can reach and rescue; and that for the poorest of you there is a vast field of toil, and an awaiting recompense of honour. It may not be given you to speak with tongues, but you may loosen other tongues which have been dumb too long. You may not be able to work miracles of healing, but you can carry the paralysed into the Healer's presence. If you cannot wield the influence which commands, you can exert the influence which blesses, and while those who have been merely gifted will die out of remembrance, like the flaring street-lamps when the great morning shines, your life of goodness may be as the name of the woman who anointed the Saviour, a fragrant memory both for earth and heaven.

It is time, however, that we refer to the great work which more than any other has contributed to Wilberforce's fame. When he became a changed man, his parliamentary position was felt to be not only a trust from his constituents but a

stewardship from God. He cast about to find a question worthy of his advocacy, and he tells us in his journal that he believed God had called him to labour for two things—the Reformation of Manners, and the Abolition of the Slave Trade.

In reference to the first of these objects, it was greatly owing to him that a Royal Proclamation was issued against vice and immorality, and that a Society was formed to carry its provisions into effect. But the latter was the work of his life. There was already in many minds a conviction of the giant evils of slavery. God sows his truth-seeds broadcast, and they spring up in different furrows when once the time of harvest comes. Hence we may settle in a word a controversy which ought never to have arisen, whether Wilberforce or Clarkson was the earliest and best friend of the slave. If a twin superlative may be allowed for the occasion, they were both earliest and both best. Each did a work which the other could not have done so well, and "the tongue could not say to the hand, I have no need of thee." In the order of time, indeed, the first blow at the monster was struck by neither of the twain, but by the stalwart arm of Granville Sharpe. This hard-working Ordnance clerk, believing that there could be no slavery upon British ground, took up the cause of a negro who had escaped, but whom his master claimed in London. With three of the judges against him, one of them bearing the honoured name of Mansfield, Granville Sharpe "supplied the money, the leisure, the perseverance, and the learning required for the great controversy;" and after two years' fighting and weariness, it was established, to use the words of Curran, "as the spirit of the British law, that liberty is inseparable from British soil; that no matter in what language the man's doom may have been pronounced, no matter what complexion incompatible with freedom an Indian or an African sun may

have burnt upon him, no matter in what disastrous battle his liberties may have been cloven down, no matter with what solemnities he may have been devoted upon the altar of slavery, the first moment he touches the sacred soil of Britain, the altar and the god sink together in the dust."

This decision was given in 1772, and in the year following, Wilberforce, then a schoolboy fourteen years old, sent a letter to the *York Herald*, "in condemnation of the odious traffic in human flesh." Eight years afterwards, he applied to a friend, who was going to Antigua, to collect information for him on the subject of the Slave Trade, and expressed his hope that he might be able at some time to redress the wrongs of slaves. In 1784, came the publication of Ramsay's tract on "The Treatment of Slaves." In 1785, a prize essay on the subject was written by Thomas Clarkson. In 1786, Sir Charles Middleton, afterwards Lord Barham, roused by the earnestness of his noble wife, wrote to Wilberforce, urging him to take the Parliamentary conduct of the cause. In 1787, the Abolition Committee was formed, with Granville Sharpe for chairman. In the same year Clarkson and Wilberforce were introduced to each other, and in the same year, after much thought and consultation with Pitt and Grenville, Wilberforce resolved to give notice of his intention to bring the subject forward. The resolution was made in the open air "at the foot of a large tree at Holwood, just before the steep descent into the vale of Keston" in Kent. You will forgive the weakness, if you think it one, which is thus minute in its mention of the spot where so high a purpose was formed. If Runnymead is not forgotten, if Iona is a sacred name, if the blood flows the fleeter in the veins as we tread that field among the Belgian dykes which men call Waterloo, if Marathon is a holy shrine, beaten by the pilgrim feet of the world, why should not the old oak at Holwood be remembered, where a brave heart resolved to do

battle with a foul wrong, and to cancel the shame of ages by loosing the shackles from the slave.

From this time, Wilberforce gave the most anxious study to the subject of the Slave Trade and slavery, wishing neither to damage his cause by rashness, nor to weaken the force of his appeals by hasty, unguarded, or exaggerated statements, which he could not bring evidence to sustain. At length, on the 12th May, 1789, the matter was brought before the House in twelve resolutions, which embodied the case of those who were friendly to the Abolition of the Slave Trade. The speech of Wilberforce was a masterly argument, warmed by a kindly humanity, and brought home with singular power. He described the horrors of the Middle Passage, in words which thrilled through his audience, and summoned Death as his "last witness, whose infallible testimony to their unutterable wrongs can neither be purchased nor repelled." Burke said of this speech, "that it equalled anything he had heard in modern times, and was not perhaps to be surpassed in the remains of Grecian eloquence." Pitt and Fox were equally warm in their praises, and equally hearty in their support of the cause. The planters succeeded in deferring the decision of the House until counsel had been heard, and evidence tendered, and thus threw it to so late a period of the Session, that it was of necessity postponed. One argument which was urged by the opponents of the motion was, that if we, from generous motives, abandoned the trade in slaves, France would be sure to take it up, and so the old commercial jealousy was excited to defend the iniquity. It was thought that if France and England could act in concert, this objection would be removed. Mr. Clarkson accordingly spent five months in Paris, trying to interest the leaders of public opinion in his cause. He was sanguine of success, and wrote home that "he would not be surprised if the National

Assembly would do themselves the honour of voting away the diabolical traffic in a night." It would have been quite in accordance with the practice of that motley assembly, to dispense with a stray abomination as readily as with an old regime, for with them age had no charm, and prescription no claim to regard; but this correspondence with the early chiefs of the Revolution hindered the Abolition of the Slave Trade for years. The opposition could hardly fail to seize upon so fair a cry, and the charge of "French principles," fastened upon the friends of the slave, had great effect upon the unreasoning and the timid. In 1792, Mr. Dundas, no friend of the cause, carried through the Commons a Bill for the gradual Abolition of the Slave Trade, and the year 1796 was fixed as the time when it should cease. In 1793, however, the House refused to confirm its vote of the preceding year. Wilberforce acted on the maxim of Cromwell, that while "it is good to strike when the iron is hot, it is better to make the iron hot by striking," for, from this time until 1806, the question was annually renewed, sometimes with partial success, sometimes with absolute and mortifying failure. During this period, the efforts of the negro's friends never relaxed. Wilberforce lived in faith and hope through the dreary years of the French Revolution, often disheartened, often abused, but cheered by the zeal of his helpers, whom Pitt had christened "the white negroes," by the conscience of right, and by the deepening convictions of the thoughtful and godly throughout the land. Almost the last work in which John Wesley was engaged was to write to Wilberforce, urging him to go on in the name of God, and in the power of his might, in opposing "that execrable villany which is the scandal of religion, of England, and of human nature." This was written on the 24th February, 1791, and on the 2nd March, the faltering hand which wrote it had lost its cunning. The churches woke up to the unrighteous-

ness of the commerce in slaves, and that cause which had commended itself by its policy and mercy, took hold of the conscience, and was baptized by the inspirations of religion.

It could not be expected that a work which assailed so many vested interests could be undertaken without violent opposition. Where there is a temple of Diana, there will always be a large class who make silver shrines, and the cause was damaged both by the ceaseless activity of its enemies, and by the indifference or treachery of its professed friends. The motives of those whom Wilberforce led out into the lobby were not in all cases equally pure. You remember the anecdote of the gentleman who fell from his horse in the park. A crowd gathered round him. "If the gentleman had but taken lessons in my school," said one, "this accident would not have happened." He was a riding-master. "How finely the figure was fore-shortened in falling," said a man with an artist's eye. A mathematician affirmed that "he made a parabolic curve." A lawyer speculated "whether the poor man had made his will." There seemed only one sensible man in the company, who had wit enough to say, "Send for a doctor, and let us get the poor man home." All these characters were found on the side of the slave. Some had crotchets of their own. Some were sentimental. Some balanced the chances, and went with the stronger party. Some speculated upon the division of the property, and there were few who were disposed at all hazards to do the right, because it was the right, and from no other motive in the world. Hence, what with those who had crooked principles, and those who had no principles at all, he could not count upon the sustained enthusiasm in his followers which made the cause a holy thing to him. Then he grieved over the flippancy of many who were glad enough to share the triumph, but who shrank from the danger of the battle, characters such as vexed the soul of Hotspur—

"For he made me mad
To see him shine so brisk and smell so sweet,
And talk so like a waiting-gentlewoman,
Of guns, and drums, and wounds.
And telling me the sovereign'st thing on earth
Was parmaceti, for an inward bruise;
And that it was great pity, so it was,
That villanous saltpetre should be digged
Out of the bowels of the harmless earth,
Which many a good tall fellow had destroyed
So cowardly;—and but for these vile guns,
He would himself have been a soldier."

In the defeat of 1796, when the Bill was thrown out by four on the third reading, Wilberforce says, "There were enough at the Opera to have carried it." They acknowledged it to be a noble cause, but "The Two Hunchbacks" was brought out that night, and a bleeding slave had no chance against a splendid singer. Moreover, the most dismal results were prophesied to flow from the Abolition of the Slave Trade — French supremacy, the ruin of Liverpool and Bristol, the revolt of the colonies, unexampled massacre of human life, the dismemberment of the empire; all these horrible spectres were conjured before the eyes of well meaning but frightened squires, and as appeals to selfish fears are nearly always successful, it is not wonderful that the end was so long delayed. The talent of the House was on the side of the slave. There was scarcely a man of mark on the other side, except Dundas, who trimmed, and Windham, who hated the cause as soon as it became popular. So much was this felt that the opposition was described by one of themselves as having entered upon the war of the Pigmies against the Giants; but the planters had many friends, the Lords as usual were averse to innovations, a prince of the blood denounced the proposal in unmeasured terms, and it was known that it had to contend against the determined opposition of the king.

The character of the leading Abolitionists was fiercely assailed. Ramsay was done to death by slander. Zachary Macaulay suffered reproach and loss, and Wilberforce was exposed to the rancour of exasperated foes. A West Indian captain haunted him for two years with threats of personal injury. He was called a saint, a hypocrite, a regicide, a Jacobin, a liar. In some of the West Indian Islands the papers of his correspondents were seized. The petition from Glasgow was directed to another, that it might not be suspected, and a friend writing to him from Liverpool implored him to be kind enough not to frank his reply. The violence of the feeling may be gathered from a humorous passage in a letter of Thomas Gisborne, in which he says, "I shall expect to read in the newspapers of your being carbonadoed by West Indian planters, barbecued by African merchants, and eaten by Guinea captains, but do not be daunted, for I will write your epitaph." "So you intend to be a reformer of men's morals, young man," said an old peer, "that is the end of reformers," and he pointed to a picture of the crucifixion, which, as his biographers say, was "no likely sight to frighten a Christian warrior." In the House the opposition was sometimes carried on with very unparliamentary fierceness, but his temper and his courage stood the test. It is said that only once, during his public life was he known to retort upon an opponent with anything like sarcastic bitterness. This was when he was called "the honourable and religious member," and the vigorous irony with which he stung the assailant caused his friends to marvel, not that he possessed such powers, but that, having them, he should have restrained them so nobly and so long. The greatest cause of delay, however, in the passing of the measure, was the political aspect of the world. The events in France at the close of the last century,—the revolution, whose early promise was lost in its after carnage and profanity and blood,—

coupled with the fact that many of those who favoured abolition were known to look upon the revolution, at least in its early stages, with favour, made the discussion of the subject impossible for several years, and the Haytian insurrection was regarded as but a type of the atrocity which would follow, if the views of the friends of liberty were suffered to prevail. Yet this very insurrection was in proof of one of the positions which the advocates of freedom were obliged to establish and defend. There were not wanting those who denied the manhood of the African, his fitness for self-government, his capacity to acquire and to retain ideas, his sense of degradation and of slavery, and with a strange perversion of the spirit of Scripture it was maintained that God had fixed the curse of Ham upon his children to the latest generation. The refutation of these calumnies was not easy, until St. Domingo repelled them in blood. The burning sense of bondage, suffering hidden for years but sternly repressed lest it might hinder the purpose, genius to combine and patience to wait the hour, valour in fight, and withal much of human passion, and revenge, and pride, were displayed in that rebellion, and there was a terrible force in the climax of those noble words in which James Montgomery vindicated the manhood of the slave.

> "Is he not man, though knowledge never shed
> Her quickening beams on his neglected head?
> Is he not man, though sweet religion's voice,
> Ne'er bade the mourner in his God rejoice?
> Is he not man, by sin and suffering tried?
> Is he not man, for whom the Saviour died?
> Belie the negro's powers! In headlong will
> Thy brother, Christian, thou shalt prove him still.
> Belie his virtues; since his wrongs began,
> His follies and his crimes have stamped him Man."

But in spite of all who disgraced, or dallied with, or

opposed, or betrayed the cause, the Slave Trade was destined to fall. A conviction of its iniquity grew upon the national mind, and a righteous anger was kindled in the national heart, and, although from the frequent defeats of the motion, it had come to be regarded as Wilberforce's hobby, which he must ride once a year into the House, there was rising among the people a resolve that the share of England in the guilt and shame of the unholy traffiic, should be purged away. "They willed the deed, and therefore it was done." The great men whose eloquence had helped the cause in its beginnings were gone, even Fox did not live to share the victory which he had contributed to gain; but in the early part of 1807, the Abolition of the Slave Trade was made a Government measure. Lord Grenville carried it gallantly through the Lords, and Lord Howick in the Commons did the first of that long series of patriotic services which have thrown so rich a lustre on the name of Charles, Earl Grey. There had been some alarm about a "terrific list of doubtfuls," but when the division came only sixteen were found to vote against the Bill, while 283 votes were recorded in its favour. In the eloquent speech of Sir Samuel Romilly, who had given to the cause every energy of his fine nature, he contrasted the feelings of Napoleon in all his greatness with those of the honoured individual who, after twenty years of labour, would that night lay his head upon his pillow, and remember that the Slave Trade was no more. The House caught and welcomed the allusion, and applause burst forth such as was scarcely ever heard before in either House of Parliament. And right well did he deserve the honour. It is the fashion to decorate the man who leads the army to triumph. I would rather see the stars upon the man who did the night-work in the trenches, or who led the forlorn hope against the foe. But here both are one. It must have been indeed a happy day. Con-

gratulations poured in upon him on every side, while he, the observed of all observers, was clothed with humility as with a garment, the same genial, earnest, unaffected Christian as before. "What shall we abolish next?" was his half-playful, half-practical question as his friends gathered to rejoice in their success. "Let us make out the names of the sixteen," said William Smith, whose zeal would have pilloried them all. "Never mind the miserable sixteen, think rather of the glorious 283," was Wilberforce's generous reply. Even yet the measure had almost been delayed because of a threatened breaking up of the Cabinet. It was the last act of the Grenville ministry, and received the royal assent on the 25th of March, 1807. In the very year in which this hateful commerce was abolished, victory, which had long been doubtful, began to wait upon our arms, and there started that series of successes which gave peace to Europe, and which sent her oppressor to fret in exile through the remorseful years, and in St. Helena's loneliness to slumber in a nameless grave.

The next object of Wilberforce and his friends was to garner up the results of the victory. The registers of succeeding years are full of the efforts which were made by diplomatic and other correspondence to induce other nations to follow in the wake of England in the work of humanity, and so great was the success that North America, Venezuela, Buenos Ayres, Chili, Denmark, Sweden, Holland, France, successively abolished the Slave Trade, promises of gradual abolition were wrung even from Portugal and Spain; and in 1823, so far as the influence of England could reach, no trace remained of the barbarous trade in slaves. The mind of Wilberforce then dreamed of a grander issue. Researches into the evils of the Slave Trade had impressed him with the purpose to battle against slavery itself. His failing health warned him that the cause must be entrusted to other hands, but the appeal which he wrote

and published, gave the first impulse to that successful agitation which, about the time of his own death, brought slavery to an end throughout the dominions of the British Crown. Although his name is identified with the cause of the slave more than with any other public question, it must not be supposed that he was a man of one idea, or that it could be said of him in the words of Grotius, that he "spent his life in strenuously doing nothing." Everything which bore upon social and moral improvement could count upon his hearty support, every outrage upon toleration or freedom found in him an eloquent enemy. His superiority to party, while it exposed him to the charge of inconsistency, made his advocacy the more valuable, because it was known to be independent, and when he was fairly prepared, and the subject was one that stirred him, his eloquence was of a high order. The purifying of elections, the relief of oppressed consciences, whether Nonconformist, Quaker, Jew, or Catholic, the lessening of the number of oaths, the mitigation of the criminal law, the national obligation to instruct and evangelize India, the sacredness of the Sabbath, the promotion of peace—all these were objects which he introduced or aided. He was firm in his opposition to extravagant expenditure, as when he resisted the increased allowance to the embarrassed princes of the blood. He was firm in his denunciation of corruption—as on Lord Melville's trial, and in his defence of religious liberty, as when he fought against Lord Sidmouth's bill; and during forty-four years he so bore himself, that he retired from public life amid the respect of friends and foes, with the reputation of being an advocate whom no bribes could buy, and whose clients were the friendless of the world.

He was as independent of his constituents as of his peers; yet, though he was rarely in the county, and his absorption in great questions left him little time to attend to local claims—

they greatly valued him. Four times he was returned without a contest, and their estimate of his worth was manifest in the great contest of 1807. The rival houses of Lascelles and Wentworth had each a son in the field, and were determined, at whatever cost, to win. The contest threatened to be ruinous to a man of moderate means, but nearly £70,000 were subscribed in a few days to meet the expense of Wilberforce's return. Not quite £30,000 of this were needed, though the joint expenses of his opponents amounted to the pretty fortune of £200,000. York was then the only polling-place for the entire county, and the election lasted fifteen days His opponents, well drilled and disciplined, had secured the greater part of the carriages, but freeholders poured into York from all quarters and in all styles—on foot, by barge, by waggon, on the back of the farmer's horse or the humbler donkey, until he was carried to the head of the poll, and kept there to the end. It was a great county's tribute to faithful service, and such was the enthusiasm, that many who had travelled long distances, declined to receive their expenses—one, a clergyman of scanty means, begging that the sum might be added to the subscription to defray the candidate's charges; and another, a sturdy freeholder, protesting that his journey had cost him nothing, for "he had ridden all the way at the back of Lord Milton's carriage."

When Wilberforce resolved upon retiring from Parliament, he wrote to Mr. Buxton, to whom he had committed the leadership of the anti-slavery cause, desiring him, as his Parliamentary executor, to move the new writ for Bramber, as he had accepted "the only place which he had ever asked of Government in his life—the stewardship of the Chiltern Hundreds." His last speech in the House was a solemn protest against leaving the question of slavery to be dealt with by the Colonial Legislatures; and at the close, as if there was some inner consciousness, that it became him to

gather up in one emphatic sentence the labours of his public life, he said, "It is with reluctance and pain that I come forward, but I esteem it my bounden duty to protest against the policy on which we are now acting. 'Liberavi animam meam.' I have delivered my soul." Thus worthily did he resign a trust which for forty years he had worthily and conscientiously fulfilled. The Christian principle which had chastened his early ambition regulated his study of every question upon which he was called to decide, preserved him from the bitterness of party strife, and from the evil of corrupt alliances, won for him a name which neither statesmanship nor eloquence could have gained, and possessed him of an influence which in the House was a tower of strength, which acted upon the people like a sorcerer's spell, and which was felt, in its vibrations, to the very ends of the world.

The connection of Wilberforce with slavery is a subject so absorbing that little time is left to speak of his character either as a man or a Christian. Madame de Stael said of him, "I have long heard of him as the most religious; I find him to be the wittiest man in England." In social life he was a blameless and beautiful character, a tender husband, a loving father, a generous friend. He was indeed the charm of every company, and nothing could be more delightful than to roam with him among the flowers which he said were "the smiles of God's goodness," and catch from him the contagious joy. While his children were infants, his engagements were so incessant that he rarely saw them, so that when one of them was unwilling to go to him, the nurse said with great simplicity, "They always were afraid of strangers;" but as their minds expanded, he watched over their training with intense solicitude, joining all the while in their amusements with a boy's heart—eager as they in the joy of some bright image, or in the sight of some fair landscape, or in

the strife of some romping or wit-quickening game. His benevolence was a passion, and in its exercise he knew no distinction of land or creed. He was generous even to prodigality. Upwards of £3000 were written off in one year's balance-sheet to the account of charity, bestowed often upon strangers whose only claim was distress, and often, like the gentle dew, a balm which dropped unseen. His religion was an earnest, cheerful, working piety, whose faith wrought by love, and was never so trustful as when thus employed. Through life he was an attached member of the Established Church, and had a reasonable dislike of anything which weakened its influence or interfered with its supremacy. He praises the goodness of God in his removal from his uncle's house as that which opened the way to his sphere of usefulness in life. "If I had staid with my uncle," he says, "I should probably have been a bigoted, despised Methodist." This marriage of active and passive adjectives must have been suggested by some wayward association of ideas, for though he could not help being "despised," he could choose whether the other ugly adjective might be rightfully applied to his name. However, I am here to-night to dissolve the partnership. I am a Methodist—therefore, I suppose, "despised"—but free enough from bigotry to rejoice with all sincerity that the lot of William Wilberforce was cast in another communion. The great work of God is above all our isms, and unless God had wrought a special miracle, the work which he was called to do could not have been accomplished by a Nonconformist, even if he had had an Apostle's commission, and a Seraph's zeal. It required a position of advantage which nothing but the State Church could give. His mission was to the formal and thoughtless, who trooped to fashionable churches on the Sabbath as to fashionable assemblies in the week, and they would listen only to one of themselves. But while I rejoice in this, I am glad, for his own sake and

for the sake of his Christianity, that he had not so small a soul as hasty readers of his "Life" would be apt to suppose. He was a lover of good men wherever they were to be found, prized the ministry of good William Jay, as "one of the greatest of his Bath pleasures," spoke "of the unaffected pleasure with which he reflected that their names would be permanently associated," and said that he felt a "oneness and sympathy with the cause of God at large which would make it delightful to hold communion, once every year with all churches, holding Christ as their Head." He would have been a traitor to his own large heart if he had been otherwise. He preferred, doubtless, the uniform and discipline of what he thought was the regular army, but he was too good, and withal, too shrewd a man to despise the volunteers. The same spirit led him to join heart and hand in the formation of the Bible Society, an amiable weakness for which his biographers think he is "hardly to be blamed." The half-apologetic, half-admiring strain in which this is referred to in the Memoirs, is irresistibly comical. It reminds one of the old Cumberland lady's apology for Wordsworth, "Aye, poor man, though he does go booing his poetry among the woods, I assure you he'll sometimes come into my cottage, and say, 'How dy'e do, Janet,' as sensible as you or me." I fancy you will agree that he is "hardly to be blamed" for assisting into being the grandest and most catholic institution in the world. And, perhaps, you may be disposed to wish that the same amiable weakness had descended as an heir-loom, and you would not only "hardly blame," but heartily welcome the adhesion to the Bible Society of one who, in hereditary eloquence, worthily sustains the name.

The last years of his life were chequered, but hardly clouded, by opposition in the building of a church upon which he had set his heart, and by a serious reverse of for-

tune, which made it necessary greatly to retrench his style of living. He found a home, alternately, in the parsonages of two of his sons, whose filial piety rejoiced, like Æneas, to requite the good Anchises' care. Two days after the tidings of his loss had come, he took "a solitary walk with the Psalmist," and came back from the inspired fellowship trustful and happy ; and when his home was broken up, and he had fairly realised the change which had happened to him, so sure and thankful was his faith in God that he says, "he can scarce understand why his life is spared so long, except it be to show that a man can be as happy without a fortune as with one." The fruits of his early decision for God were manifest in the quiet cheerfulness of his age, in "honour, love, obedience, troops of friends," and in the calmness, free from excitement as from despondency, with which he awaited his change. He had always taken sunny views of life, he had felt much of the rapture of existence, and his closing days were one long psalm of praise. He died on the 29th July, 1833, having nearly completed his seventy-fourth year.

Meanwhile, in his retirement, the great work of his life was speeding to its fulfilment. The Abolition of Slavery aroused as much hostility on the one hand, and as much enthusiasm on the other, as the Abolition of the Trade in Slaves. Fowell Buxton brought to his work the same holy passion, the same fervour, the same perseverance, as indomitable an energy, a homelier, but still forceful eloquence, and in some respects, a bolder courage. He was well sustained by Mackintosh and Denman, names which it were idle to praise, and but that "sacrifice to heroes is reserved till after sunset," it were easy to enlarge upon the services of Stephen Lushington and Henry Brougham. Their efforts were nobly sustained by their allies outside of Parliament, and by the missionaries of the various churches, who thrilled

the Christians of England by the energy of their appeals, and to whom the cause of freedom owes a debt which another world only can repay. The early years of the Anti-Slavery struggle were employed chiefly in the exposure of the evils of the existing system, for the most sanguine among them scarcely dared to hope for the speedy success of their cause. The Government was anxious that the matter should be taken up by the Colonial Houses of Assembly, but their circulars were disregarded, an attitude of defiance was assumed, and the motives and conduct of the Abolitionists were attacked with a fierceness which showed at once the venom of the serpent, and the consciousness that he was writhing in the mortal agony. "We will pray the Imperial Parliament,' said the Jamaica Journal, "to amend their origin, which is bribery; to cleanse their consciences, which are corrupt; to throw off their disguise, which is hypocrisy; to break with their false allies, who are the saints; and finally, to banish from among them all the purchased rogues, who are three-fourths of their number." In the meantime, public opinion, the mightiest advocate of any question, was gathering force year by year. The planters, by their contempt and recklessness, as well as by their cruelty, had alienated many who were inclined to their side. The most atrocious severities were proved against them, facts were disclosed at which the people shuddered as at the breath of a pestilence, and the nation rose as one man, flung forth the twenty millions of compensation with indignant scorn, and demanded that slavery should cease throughout the realm. Petitions poured in in shoals. One from the Ladies of England, to which there were 187,000 signatures, was as large as a feather-bed, was borne up the House by four stalwart members, and, as an eye-witness assures me, deposited on the floor, in pity for the overtaxed strength which would have been required to place it on the table. The Bill was introduced by the present Lord Derby on the 14th May, and on the 7th August

it passed the House of Commons. The masterly eloquence of the Colonial Secretary found ample scope in the subject, and for nearly four hours the House listened unwearied to old truths in a new setting, till at the close the following tribute aroused them to irrepressible enthusiasm. "Sir, what will be the joy of that venerable man, now lying, it is feared, on his deathbed, who, for so many years, through evil and through good report, firmly and consistently laboured in the cause of the slave? The language of that venerable man will surely be to-night, in the last words of the prophet, Lord, now lettest Thou thy servant depart in peace according to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation." These words were at once a homage and a prophecy, for the Bill was read a second time on Friday, 26th July, and on the following Monday the veteran Christian entered into the joy of his Lord. Thus, within the short period of one man's life by the blessing of God upon the efforts of persevering goodness, were achieved two of the noblest triumphs of humanity, triumphs which redeemed colour from the catalogue of crime, and which gave the right to 700,000 of our fellows, made in the image of the same dear God, to stand up in the face of the world and of the sun, no longer chattels, but with the words on every lip,—"I myself also am a MAN."

And are they lost, these toils of the past? Did these, our noble fathers, strive in vain? Men tell us so, sometimes. They tell us that the old horror of slavery has passed away, that English blood has become cold, and its righteous anger no longer burns, and it can listen calmly to tales of bondage and of wrong. But it is not true. It is a libel upon the land and race of freemen. The English hatred of slavery lies deeper than a chance protest against its cruelty at the bidding of some mighty voice. It is a hatred of the thing itself—as a thing vile and damnable, condemned by the unchangeable principles of morals; an outrage upon man,

and a dishonour against God. Tell us that it has sometimes been unworthily opposed. Tell us that vapouring and hollowness have marred the noble efforts of its enemies. Tell us that personal kindness, and a valour like that of chivalry, have sometimes redeemed the injustice of its friends. Tell us that the cruelties have been overstated, and that the benefits have been undervalued. Tell us that Legrees exist now but in fancy, and that the slavery of to-day is swept of their accursed race. Strip the thing of all its public deformity, remove away from it its coarser horrors, it is the same still. It defies you to refine it into beauty. There is THE THING—foul, dastardly, bad from beginning to end, an insult to humanity, an affront upon our common manhood, a curse upon every country which cleaves to it, a loathing to every heart that is true, a lie against the Majesty of Heaven.

Oh remember, that it is at once the proof and the duty of freedom, that we labour to make others free.

"Truest freedom is to share
All the chains our brothers wear,
And with heart and hand to be,
Earnest to make others free.
They are slaves who fear to speak
For the fallen and the weak.
They are slaves who will not choose
Hatred, scoffing, and abuse,
Rather than in silence shrink
From the Truth they needs must think.
Men! whose boast it is that ye,
Come of Fathers brave and free,
If there lives a man whom ye,
By your labour can make free;
Then ye are not free and brave
While there breathes on earth a slave."

M. Renan on the Kingdom of God.

A LECTURE

BY

THE VERY REV. WILLIAM ALEXANDER, M.A.,

DEAN OF EMLY, RECTOR OF CAMUS-JUXTA-MOURNE, AND CHAPLAIN TO THE LORD-LIEUTENANT OF IRELAND.

M. RENAN ON THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

THE Greek language, so fertile in distinctions, has, in one case apparently a strange deficiency. The same nouns signify a medicine and a poison, a druggist and a poisoner; the same verb signifies to administer drugs and to administer poison. Physiologists have shown that this apparent confusion is indeed the expression of a finer tact for natural truth, that poisonous substances which traverse the system without fixing in it are healing not destructive, a source of life rather than a fountain of death. "We purify," says an ingenious foreign writer,* "we even whiten one of the most precious elements of man, by the blackest of substances, the frightful debris of putrefaction and death." These natural laws find their counterpart in the world of thought, in philosophy, in morality, and even in theology. A spiritual poison may benefit the spiritual system, if it traverse it without fixing there. A spiritual aliment may be blanched and purified by the blackest sophistry.

Such a function has been fulfilled for the Gospels in the present century by one notorious Life of Christ. Such a function, I believe, He who brings health out of poisons

* Foucher de Careil.

has assigned to Renan's Life of Jesus. "The things which happened unto me," may the Church say, "have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the Gospel."

To every great school of thought in Europe there comes, sooner or later, the inevitable question, What think ye of Christ? In the somewhat affected language of the day, every philosophy must have its Christology. Thus Hegelianism has had its anti-evangelist in Strauss, and Positivism in Renan—the gay brilliance of French romance, and the heavy insolence of German criticism.

With the anti-historical spirit of all Pantheists, Strauss endeavoured to evaporate the life of Christ, to abolish the Christian idea of God's oneness with man as a sensible fact into a distant and dreamy vision. The sensation produced by this attempt was very great. It has been said that every word which has been written upon the Gospels for the last thirty years has been directly or indirectly influenced by Strauss. The results of the idealistic poison upon the church have, however, been in many respects most blessed. The Gospels have been studied by Christian scholars with a deeper thoughtfulness and a minuter care. A new life has been imparted to Biblical criticism. The thoroughly historical character of the Evangelical narratives has been established with a fulness which Christian apologists of the last century cannot pretend to rival. Under the glass of modern criticism the very nebulæ of the Gospel have come out into stars. Faith can see yet further in those Divine words, into whose clear depths eighteen centuries have looked down and never yet found the bottom of their meaning.

It is my own conviction that M. Renan is destined to do for the character and ideas of our Lord that which Strauss has done for His history. I therefore venture to bring before you to-night M. Renan's interpretation of one of the

leading ideas in the Saviour's teaching, that of the Kingdom of God. In carrying out this task, I shall have to present you with an analysis of the Gospel notion of the Kingdom of God, as presented to the nineteenth century by a brilliant member of the French Institute. I must prove in reference to two out of the three elements said to be comprised in this notion, that they are utter misrepresentations. The alleged moral tendency of one portion of this teaching on the Kingdom of God must then be examined. The subject, painful as it is, needs no apology; the appearance of a cheap translation of Renan's Life of Jesus is, I feel, its justification. Of its treatment I shall only say that I bring before you a train of thought which has passed through my own mind, and that I descend into the arena with scarcely any other weapon than a New Testament.*

The analysis given by M. Renan of the "Form of Christ's ideas on the Kingdom of God," is as follows:

The Saviour's notion of the Kingdom of God was compounded of three elements, one democratic, one transcendental, one apocalyptic, or in plainer words, fanatical. The democratic idea of a kingdom of poor men, not *pauperes spiritu*, but literally paupers, a paradise of *sans culottes*, an elysium of happy children of the eastern sunshine. The transcendental idea of a spiritual deliverer introducing an inward emancipation. The apocalyptic idea of an immediate and literal fulfilment of certain current Jewish superstitions about the kingdom of heaven, originally derived from Daniel and the apocryphal Book of Enoch.

The first or democratic element of this dream faded away before the teaching of experience. Indeed, it would have required an ambitious man to carry it out; and M. Renan

* Let me, however, acknowledge the extent of my obligation to the Abbé Freppel's "Examen Critique de la Vie de Jésus, de M. Renan," on many subsidiary points in this lecture.

has justice enough in his blasphemy to admit that the King of the Church was free from external ambition.

The second and third elements of this conception were, it is said, held simultaneously by our Master. The view of the Kingdom of God as an inward deliverance was supplemented by the other, or Apocalyptic view, of an immediate outward advent. Of these three elements alleged to exist in our Saviour's conception of the Kingdom of God, I purpose to consider the first and the third.

I. The kingdom of God, in its original projection from the Saviour's mind was, it is said, the pantisocracy of a Hebrew Coleridge, a democracy of gay and happy Galilean *lazzaroni*.

This is the main feature in M. Renan's delineation of our Saviour's character. It is the needle point on which the edifice is scaffolded. He was, so we are told, originally a gay and joyous teacher of natural religion. The Cross was an afterthought, which shaped itself out of the mists of experience, until a sombre giant fills the foreground of the picture from which a happy youth has receded. Every Christian knows that in the earlier part of our Lord's teaching, the Cross is, as it were, half, and but half, concealed. Still, as the end draws nearer, not more truly, but as it were with shadow lengthening as the sunset comes, while one spectral peak after another in the long defile of the Agony and Passion is grandly lit up with the purposes of God, He sees the stern bare Cross ever rising in the distance.

I must here read an extract illustrative of this theory, partly too as a specimen of M. Renan's style. Ah! M. Renan's style. The world has heard much of that. For my part, I am apt to suppose that no man writes very well who reasons very ill. I agree with a French critic, quite above all suspicion of Christianity, who calls it "prose engluée"—

stickey prose. I believe that it is to be classed under the style which Cicero of old called the greasy pastry, or the rouge and curling-tongs sort of writing :—

"The beautiful climate of Galilee," says M. Renan, "made of the existence of these honest fishers a perpetual enchantment. It is hard to conceive the intoxication of a life passing away thus in face of the sky; the sweet flame given by this perpetual contact with nature; the charm of those nights passed under the clear stars, beneath an azure dome of depth without an end. Jesus lived with His disciples generally in the open air. Sometimes He was in a boat; sometimes on the mountains which border the lake, where the air is so pure, and the horizon so luminous. The troop of the faithful wandered gay and errant. Sometimes a simple doubt, a question of gentle scepticism arose. The Master silenced it with a smile, or with a look."

Some one said that Voltaire wrote daggers; M. Renan writes sugar-plums. If the faith, which is our life of life, must die, let it die by a poisoned dagger, rather than by a poisoned sugar-plum.

M. Renan's originality is the cry of other admirers. Some of you know Boswell's "Johnson." You remember Oliver Goldsmith dressed out in the peach-coloured coat, made by John Filby, at the Harrow, in Water-lane. The Doctor knew very well why the worthy tailor insisted that his name should be mentioned. He guessed that the strange tint would attract crowds to gaze, who might thus see how well John Filby could make a coat, even of so absurd a colour. As Filby was to Goldsmith, so is Renan to Paulus.

Let us contrast the wild rant of this poor romance with the Divine original.

The Sermon on the Mount is admitted by M. Renan to be in the main authentic and genuine. It is the chief authority to which he ventures to appeal in support of his

interpretation of the Saviour's Kingdom of God. As we happen to read our New Testaments occasionally in England, and are tolerably familiar with the fifth chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel, I shall not be imposing a formidable task upon you, if I call upon you to confront M. Renan's theory with the Beatitudes.

Let us not rob the Sermon on the Mount of the external framework in which it may be set. Let us recall to mind the features of the landscape in the midst of which it was spoken, as they lay in the cloudless quiet of the southern dawn, when after continuing all night in prayer to God, as the first light broke, He lifted up His eyes on His disciples, and spoke those words which Christendom will never let die. I am not afraid to cite M. Renan's own words, among the few in his volume which a Christian may read without a sigh, and repeat without a shudder. "The lake, the horizon, the shrubs, the flowers, these are all which remain of the little tract of three or four leagues in which Christ founded His Divine work. The trees have totally disappeared. In this country the vegetation was formerly so exuberant, that Josephus saw in it a kind of miracle; nature, according to him, having taken her pleasure in bringing, side by side, the plants of all countries, the productions of the burning zone, the trees of temperate climates, laden all years with flowers and fruits. Yet here, at the present time, one calculates a day beforehand the place where one may find on the morrow, a little shadow for repose. The lake is deserted. One boat alone, in the most miserable condition, at present cuts the waves, formerly so rich in life and joy. But the waters are still light and transparent. The strand, composed of rocks or pebbles, is much that of a tiny sea, and not of a great pool. It is clear, stainless, without deposit, always beaten up to the same point by the light movement of the waves. Little promontories covered with laurel trees,

tamarisks, and thorny capers, display their lines in it. At two portions, especially, at the issue of the Jordan near Tarichæa, and on the border of the plain of Gennesareth, there are parterres of intoxicating beauty, where the waves lull themselves to rest upon mounds of turf and flowers. Clouds of birds cover the lake. The horizon is dazzling with light. The waters of heavenly azure, deep packed between burning rocks, appear, when they are seen from the top of the mountains of Safed, to fill the bottom of a cup of gold. Northward, the snowy ravines of Hermon cut themselves out in white lines upon the sky. Westward, the high undulating plateaux of Gaulonitis and Perea, perfectly arid, and clad by the sun with a sort of velvety atmosphere, form a compact mountain, or, more accurately, a long and very high terrace, which, from Cesarea Philippi, runs indefinitely towards the south. The ravishing beauty of nature impressed some idyllic charm upon all the dreams of Galilee. The saddest country in the world is perhaps the region near Jerusalem. Galilee, on the contrary, was the true land of the Song of Songs, and of the lays of the well-Beloved. For the two months of March and April, the country is a carpet of flowers, of incomparable exuberance of colours. The animals are small, but of great gentleness. Strong, plump, and lively turtle-doves; blue thrushes, so light that they touch the shrub without bending it; crested larks, which almost run under the traveller's feet; little tortoises, whese eye is soft and quick; storks, with grave and modest air, laying aside all timidity, allow themselves to be approached very closely by man. In no country in the world do the mountains display themselves with more harmony, or inspire loftier thoughts. Christ seems to have loved them especially."

This is very pretty description, though the purely idyllic character of the landscape is artfully exaggerated. For the

Anti-Lebanon never fails to give majesty to this scene, and the mountains on the eastern shore of Gennesareth are bare and gloomy. Yet let us not be too exacting. It is well that external nature, at least, should gain something from the pencil of him who has degraded every human shape which he has delineated, except that of Judas Iscariot.

Nor need we dwell too long upon those who are artistically *posed* in this fair scenery. "The exclusively idealist people, whose ethereal dreams took a charming and idyllic turn, in whose bosom life became spiritualised into a sort of poetic mysticism; those young populations, with an illimitable faculty of belief; the good and gentle Galileans to whom objection found no access." These exclusive idealists, indeed, were men bronzed under the Syrian sun, working for their daily bread. These young populations, with illimitable capacity of belief, comprised the cities of Chorazim, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, which the Saviour upbraided for qualities apparently of a different kind. And those good and gentle creatures, to whom objection never found access, sought to fling Him from the Mount of Precipitation.

Nor will we enquire too closely into the name of idyll, applied so often to that life, short in years, in sorrows unutterably long. Strange idyll, surely, such as Theocritus never sung,* which begins with the fast in the wilderness, and ends with the cry of anguish from those pale and patient lips, under the awful shade of the crown of thorns!

Enough, I repeat, of the scene and its adjuncts. Now for the words. The bell that has so long hung silent is about to toll. What are the birth-notes of the chime? The soft air which blows over that sunny land, is about to be laden with benedictions. Who are to receive the first? If M. Renan be right, the gay, the happy, the contented. Yet listen. "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of

* See M. Freppel.

heaven." Surely, if words are not given to conceal thought, the poor in spirit must just be those who have a sense of need: those who are *not* happy, *not* satisfied. Listen once more. "Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted." They that mourn! a strange synonym for thoughtless hearts, "the intoxication of whose life it is difficult to conceive." But there is one stranger synonym for a kingdom of God opened to a gay and smiling throng of happy poor men. In the parallel passage of St. Luke's Gospel, we hear a deep and dreadful echo, rolling on through gorge and glen, as if from the peaks of Sinai: "Woe unto you that laugh now!"

I say, confidently, that M. Renan's chapter on "The kingdom of God conceived as the advent of the poor," (and, what is more important, his whole conception of the Redeemer's character), is refuted at once by the first verses of the Sermon on the Mount.

II. We may now enter upon the examination of the so-called Apocalyptic elements in the conception of the kingdom of God, which is found in the record of our Lord's teaching. In this part of our survey, we may first consider and account for the apparent promise of an immediate Advent, of which M. Renan ventures to speak so blasphemously.

It is in reference to this so-called Apocalyptic element that M. Renan makes the most distinct and definite statements in his work—I had almost said the only distinct and definite statements, which are not oiled and lubricated for unbelief made-easy by a "perhaps," except the assertion of the impossibility of miracles. Thus he states, in various passages, that "Christ's declaration upon the proximity of the world's catastrophe leaves no room for any equivocation:"—that "the world has *not* ended, as He announced;"—that "we must excuse His hope of a vain Apocalypse;"—that "He accepted the Utopias of His time and race, though we must

not despise His chimera;"—that "the literal acceptation by the disciples, and at certain moments by the Master himself, of an immediate and outward Judgment, comes out in the writings of the time with absolute evidence;" that "the realistic conception of the Divine Advent has been a shadow of passing deception which that death has caused us to forget."

Every one who has listened carefully to the New Testament has heard in it the strokes of a grand and solemn knell over creation. This knell, indeed, is much older than the New Testament. The two first prophecies are of the first and second Advent. When man had only come from his Maker's hand about a thousand years, Enoch rung it first, "Behold, the Lord cometh!" The Church has been waiting five thousand years. But the aged creation lingers on still. The priests of God stand waiting at the gate, and the bell tolls on for evermore, but the funeral train has not yet appeared.

I need not pause to cite a multitude of texts which speak apparently of the proximity of the world's catastrophe, and of the Saviour's visible return. I shall mention but two circumstances. Names are originally significant. Greg or Gregg is a not very euphonious abbreviation of Gregory; and the names, once so common in the Church, of Gregory and Vigilantius, testify to a time when the Lord's command, "*Watch ye*," (γρηγορεῖτε in Greek, *Vigilate* in Latin) had a solemn meaning. The Syro-Chaldaic words "Maran-atha," "Our Lord cometh," seem to have become a watchword in the early Church.

I shall account for these passages, and offer some proofs that the solution is true.

In the *first* place, then, many of these passages, especially the most striking of all in the twenty-fourth chapter of St. Matthew, are to be interpreted according to the analogy of all prophecy. Except in a few specified cases, time is not defined by the prophets. The future is projected

like a timeless picture before the soul of the seer. Objects which are near seem almost to touch those which are remote. This may be illustrated by the beautiful optical illusion which causes the broad disk of the setting sun to seem as if it crushed down upon the western hills, or the moon to appear as if its white fire were silently interwoven through the sombre mass of a distant grove.

Our Lord, indeed, differs from other prophets. They needed a divine enthusiasm to make them receptive of the prophetic influence. The sound of a lyre awakened, or the lulling music of waters, calmed them. We feel that they were animated by an extraneous impulse, that they "spake as they were *moved* by the Holy Ghost." But the spirit of prophecy is not a suddenly infused light in our Lord's mind, momentarily illuminating distant prospects like the lightning flash, and then dying away. The mysteries of futurity, the ages to come, are seen by a habitual light. Still, our Lord as prophet conformed to the very characteristics of prophecy. The prophets were not historians by anticipation, Milmans and Macaulays of the future. They were describers of pictures unseen by others. They saw, as it has been expressed, in *juxtaposition*, not in *succession*. A lyrical ode, it has been said, is sometimes connected by threads more delicate, though not less real, than those which bind together the parts of a closely-written philosophical essay. Much more is this true of prophecy. There are various kinds of method. There is the method of logical order. There is the method of a sermon, a poem, and a history. Method, in the true sense, is the apt disposition of a number of topics which may be referred to a common centre. Let us allow the prophets to follow a deeper order of their own.* Swiftly and noiselessly from the luminous centre of some

"O logician, God hath a method of His own, the prophetical method, which no rules of Aristotle will define."—*Edward Irving.*

divine principle, the prophetic spirit radiates to the furthest circumference of human events, with an order which is generally real, not chronological.

There is a *second* principle which we should bear in mind while we study those passages in Scripture which M. Renan calls Apocalyptic, and which may seem to speak of a visible and impending catastrophe. The Bible philosophy of history is not Mr. Buckle's. All history is a long judgment, a long coming of the Lord. It is much to be regretted that we have ceased to speak, like our forefathers, of the Last Judgment. He shall come to be our Judge. Nay, "verily He is a God that judgeth in the earth." There has been a judgment, or a series of judgments, along the whole track of human history. It was so even in Paradise. The Jewish nation was chosen to be a palpable specimen of God's eternal Providence, an example of His moral government. In their history we have an unveiling of the principles of His judgment. Ever and anon there pierce through the tangled story strange fore-gleams of the judgment fires and of the heavenly light. Such is the argument of the Book of Judges, and of the Books of Kings. One great saying of our Lord has been weakened by most commentators. "Wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together." In hot climates, God has so overruled the instincts of the winged scavengers of the air and peak, that they swoop down upon the carrion, and remove it out of the way. There is such a thing as moral carrion. Wherever there is a body of moral and spiritual death, a dead church, a dead state, "a something rotten in the state of Denmark," there "the carcase is." And wherever there is a temporal power of the papacy, whose stench comes up in the nostrils of awakened Italy; a reeking corpse of slavery tied to the living vigour of Southern Society; the corruptions of an unbridled democracy, where

cheating is smartness, and the dollar is almighty; there, from some quarter or other, the eagles of judgment will descend, that the lungs of nations may have a healthier play, and that they may spring forward to their destinies with a manlier elasticity in the tread of their advancing footsteps. Such to a believing man is the aspect of history. Still the eagles are gathering together. Still the musical breath of spring ripples through the trees. Still He comes with clouds. Still the saints cry, "The great day of the Lord is near." So has it been through many cycles of history, the destruction of Jerusalem, the fall of Rome, the Reformation, the French Revolution, our own time. So shall it be until, after passing through all typical judgments, the Last Judgment shall darken over the human race.

There is a *third* thought which we may take with us, while we interpret the "Apocalyptic element" in our Redeemer's teaching. Suppose, then, that it was His intention to use language which should place His generation, and each successive generation, in the position of those who *might* be alive at His coming, at the same time so adjusting the perspective of His teaching that those who lived far away should be able to apprehend the precise point of view better than His own contemporaries. Does not this supposition meet the facts of the case? "*Immediately* after the tribulation of those days." "These and similar declarations," says M. Renan, "leave no room for equivocation." "Those (observes Gibbon, 'lord of that master spell, a solemn sneer') who understood in a literal sense the discourses of Christ Himself, were obliged to expect the second and glorious coming of the Son of Man in the clouds, before that generation was totally extinguished, which had beheld His humble condition upon earth, and which might still be witness of the calamities of the Jews under Vespasian or Hadrian. The revolution of seventeen centuries has

instructed us not to press too closely the mysterious language of prophecy and revelation." Indeed! Yet in the span of that same mysterious discourse, there occur repeated notices, which we must be blind, indeed, if we cannot read. "But, and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth His coming,"—a prophecy surely, of a time in the church, not of unbelief, but of ambition and worldliness, like the Middle Ages. "While the bridegroom tarried, the word in the original almost means "spinning out the time." Again, "after a long time, the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them." Surely that space can have been no dream of the morning which seemed long to Him who said, "Before Abraham was, I am." I need not dwell upon the commission "to go into all lands," upon the institution by Christ of a church, and the inculcation of a morality, adapted to a world which was destined to last.

The application of these principles to our Lord's so called Apocalyptic declarations on the kingdom of God solves all difficulties. The vision of prophecy presents objects in juxtaposition, not succession, in space, so to speak, rather than time, mystically not chronologically; its objects are lifted into a relation beyond and out of time. All history is viewed, as it is viewed by God, as even we can view it when we see it in plan rather than in section. That is, it is a cycle of typical eras, orbing into each other, and all intersecting in the Last Judgment, of which they possess some general characteristics. Add to this the moral and spiritual ends which are gained by keeping the Advent before each successive generation.

I shall adduce two arguments to show that, if not this interpretation, at least its results must necessarily be true.

Consider, then, the opening verses of the second chapter of the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians. The view supposed to be Apostolical, supposed to be Christ's, *does* arise.

How is it treated? Why as a fanaticism, a falsehood, and a delusion. St. Paul beseeches them, not exactly by, but (as Professor Jowett well translates it) "on behalf of, as though he were teaching in honour of that day, that the expectation of it might not be a source of disorder in the church."

But further. Admit not merely that the primitive Christians looked for and expected Christ (which they did, at time, with an almost excessive tension) but, that they considered that "experience would belie Him cruelly, if the world was obstinate enough to last on after that generation," what would have been the result?—Why this, that when St. John, or the last survivor of Christ's immediate followers died, Christianity would have died with him. Perhaps as the storm darkened up the sky of Palestine, or as by the shores of the Ægean the sun went down,—

> "Not as in northern climes, obscurely bright,
> But one unclouded blaze of living light,"

in the dark cloud, or in the deep and burning sky, a knot of poor fanatics might have looked for the sign of the Son of Man, the cross of fire, or the pierced form. But if the Gospel had been committed to that false hope, it must have been carried from its cradle to its, grave. There are men, who like Jack in Swift's coarse but instructive story, rather like a little martyrdom. "Good Sir! favour me with a handsome kick, or with a swinging slap in the face," may be the language of a few atrabilious devotees, but never for a cause which they know to be an exploded and convicted lie. The Gospel has survived all. It has survived ten persecutions. It has survived the syllogism, the epigram, and the scaffold. Diocletian, Porphyry, and Voltaire. It has survived caricatures of its doctrines, and abuses of its holiness. It is strong enough to bear the burden of man's hopes, and the mightier

burden of man's sorrows. But there is one thing which it will never survive, a refutation before the face of honest reason. There is one burden which it cannot bear, and that burden is a lie. If the Gospel had committed men to one visionary expectation, it must have expired though the destiny of humanity would have expired with it. But, just at the time, when according to M. Renan's interpretation of the great Teacher's words, their falsity was manifested, martyrs were preparing to bleed for them, and missionaries were starting with a lie in their right hand to announce it to the utmost ends of the earth. If the Gospel, if Christ and His apostles, had been committed to the doctrine that He must visibly appear in one generation, the Gospel must have died out with that generation. But the Gospel did not so die out. Therefore, the Gospel was committed to no such said doctrine.

I must attempt to sum up and illustrate the double point of view, which appears to be taken in these "Apocalyptic" passages upon the kingdom of God. On the one hand, He says "immediately;" on the other, He proclaims that the Bridegroom tarries. On the one hand, He witnesses, "I come quickly;" on the other, the ample margin of the chart unrolled in the Apocalypse is not filled by the crowded shapes of a thousand years. Let us suppose two travellers, one well acquainted with the country, the other ignorant of it, in some Alpine or Pyrenean valley. He who knows the place, in the hush of the summer night, points through the casement, and says: "Look at those twin peaks. Both are covered with snow. Both crested with the glacier. One star seems to rest with its circlet upon those two sharp mountain-horns." Would this be inconsistent with the same man's telling the same friend afterwards, that to make his way from one to the other, he must climb up ridge and stack, and cut stairs in the ice, and ascend ten thousand feet? So there was a point of view from

which the Ascension and the Second Advent seemed to touch, while yet they were known to be divided by a chasm of unnumbered years.

III. We must follow M. Renan into an examination of the moral aspects of this teaching on the side of fear and hope.

First, on the side of *fear*.

"Suspended," says M. Renan, "like a permanent menace over humanity, the end of the world, by the periodical terrors which it occasioned during centuries, caused great injury to all secular progress. Society, not feeling sure of its existence, thus contracted a sort of tremor, and those habits of degrading humility, which render the Middle Age so inferior to ancient times and modern times."

There is one statement made by M. Renan, well worthy of examination here :—"A radical change had taken place in the manner of contemplating the advent of Christ. When first it was announced to humanity that its planet was about to end, like the infant which welcomes death with a smile, it experienced the liveliest access of joy which it ever felt. As it grew old, the world clung on to life ; the day of grace became for those iron ages a day of wrath. *Dies iræ, dies illa.*"

Now, it seems to me that the very hymn to which M. Renan appeals, teaches quite the contrary lesson. The Dies Iræ was composed at the end of the thirteenth century by Cardinal Malabranca, nephew of Pope Nicholas III. Before it took its place in the medieval liturgy, very many churches preserved the Sibylline acrostics in their offices. These acrostics are a Christian forgery, but certainly as old as the third century, and the Dies Iræ is modelled upon them. I will ask you to examine the two pieces with me. I have translated the Sibylline acrostics roughly into English verse :—

"The earth shall sweat, the judgment sign in heaven shall gleam afresh,
When the King of all the ages shall come to judge all flesh.
The faithful and the infidel shall look on the Most High,
Returning in the end of time, with all His good saints by,
Set on His high tribunal, before Him all mankind,
And this fair earth a desert stretch'd far away behind;
Then men shall cast their idols far, and the gold they loved too well,
And fire shall burn earth, sea, and sky, even to the gates of hell.
Out of that wondrous trial fire, the saints shall come forth pure,
With their flesh renew'd, and shining, and fashion'd to endure.
Then every thought, and every fault, and every hidden sin,
Shall stand out in the light of God from the shadowy gulf within.
No sound except a sound of sobs, and teeth that gnash alway,
The sun shall lose his light in heaven, the moon and stars decay;
And like a parchment the great sky shall all be roll'd away.
The vales shall rise, the hills shall sink, all earth shall level be,
And not a sail shall break the blue along the vast flat sea;
The stricken land shall mourn her streams, and dashing rivers dry,
While, like a dirge, the trump of doom shall wail along the sky.
Earth, opening up her secret depths, shall rend her bosom sod,
And all her kings shall stand uncrown'd before the throne of God.
A flood of sulphur shall flow down, with yellow foam-wreaths fleck'd,
Then high the sacred cross of wood in heaven shall stand erect,
The shame and scandal of the world, the life of the elect;
The sign of glory and of pain, of triumph and of woe,
The golden source whence all our streams of health and comfort flow;
That cross shall rule the nations as with an iron rod,
This is our King, of whom I sing, and this our Saviour God."

Now for the Dies Iræ, which I have also attempted. The first seven verses are dark and fearful enough:—

"Day of wrath! that day far burning,
Presage to completion turning
Sibyl's dree, and David's yearning.

What a trembling, cheeks how ashen,
When the Judge each deed and passion
Shall discuss in strictest fashion!

Then the trump (wherever whiteth
Human dead, its music lighteth
Marvellous) to the throne us citeth.

Death and nature it surprises,
When creation thus arises,
Summon'd to the dread assizes.

Then shall be brought forth the volume,
All the subject of the solemn
Judgment writ in many a column.

When the Judge shall keep His session,
Secrets of men's hearts confession
Make in manifold procession.

Ah! what plea shall then be gravèd?
Ah! what saint by me be cravèd?
When the righteous scarce are savèd."

Now listen—

"King of Majesty, yet giver
Of the grace man merits never,
Save me! fountain of life's river.

Win me, Jesus, I implore Thee;
Me the cause that sorrow bore Thee
The long way that lay before Thee.

Seeking me Thou sattest weary,
Saving bore the cross so dreary,
Let not such a toil miscarry.

By the Magdalene pardon-sated,
By the thief's cry not belated,
Hope from Thee for me hath waited."

Surely M. Renan's statement must be reversed. I find something of the child's heart, and the child's smile at creation's death, in the hymnologist of the thirteenth century; I miss it altogether in him of the third. For all the power of the Gospel is renewed in every heart which receives it.

"This *permanent* menace." Scarcely that, according to the writer. It has ceased to be a menace, since the close

of the Apostolic age. But let that pass. He has only cited one instance in which the doctrine of the Kingdom of Glory can, with any plausibility, be accused of impeding progress. It is, of course, quite certain that at the beginning of the tenth century an universal panic took possession of Latin Christendom. It was supposed that St. John had predicted that a thousand years after Christ, Satan should be unloosed, and the judgment take place. Many retired into monasteries, or undertook pilgrimages to the Holy Land. It is said that palaces and churches were, in some instances, allowed to fall into ruins. The prevalent idea of the time is stereotyped upon legal acts and ecclesiastical donations, "approprinquante mundi termino," or "at the approach of the evening of the world." I do not see that this proves very much. It seems simply to show that money was laid out, not as we should think very sensibly, which might possibly have been worse spent; and that people—whose absence, being what they were, was probably little loss—retired into monasteries and convents. Even then, there were many Christians who met the popular panic with no unworthy arguments.

Abbo, Abbot of Fleury, writes:—"When I was a stripling, I heard a sermon at Paris preached before the people in a certain church, to the effect that, as the number of a thousand years was finished, Antichrist would come, and the universal judgment shortly succeed. To this preaching I offered opposition, as far as I could, from the Gospels, and Apocalypse, and Book of Daniel. Finally, Abbot Richard, with his sagacious mind, resisted this wide-spread error, upon receiving certain letters, which he commanded me to answer. For a report had gone through nearly the whole world, that when the Annunciation of our Lady fell upon Easter, the end of the world was surely come."

I submit still further, that the question arises, what

effect such an expectation would have upon a genuine disciple of our Blessed Lord. Would it impede "profane developments" in his case? Assuredly not. When Francis of Sales was once, after intense labour, unbending himself at a game of chess, some morbid precisian who was near asked him what he would do, if he knew that the Lord's coming was even at hand. "Finish the game," said the bishop, boldly. "For His glory I began it." General Lee wrote a striking story to his son, in a letter which has found its way into print. Last century, in New England, a day of sudden and unaccountable gloom, known yet by tradition as "the dark day," occurred while the senate of the state was sitting. The universal impression was that Doomsday had indeed come. Suddenly a well-known member stood up. "President," said he, "I propose that we pass to the order of the day. If the Judge comes, He had best find us at our duty." I will only add, that at the present moment there are men in England, in every walk of life—in the Senate, at the bar, in the army, in the counting-house, who believe that the Coming is near. I do not belong to their school of prophetic interpretation. But I will do them justice. Does their belief in the literal proximity of their Lord's coming paralyze their endeavours, or suspend their industry? Does it prevent them from contributing their quota to "the profane developments" of the age in which they are? They are just the men who are the very head and heart of every scheme for the amelioration of society. And there are those among their number who, for practical knowledge of the business of the world, no less than for sound acquaintance with the four Gospels, would put to shame any living disciple of that school of positive—very positive—philosophers, to which M. Renan belongs.

"A permanent menace." So it was. It was a menace to Enoch's age. It was a menace to Apostolic times. It was

a menace to the Middle Age. Listen to that iron bell, clanging out over an iron age, *Dies iræ*, *Dies illa*. It was a menace to Luther's time. How solemnly comes that strain from the soul of the Reformer—

> "Great God! what do I see and hear,
> The end of things created."

It is a menace to us, if you will have it so. We have only to enter one of our churches, and hear the people singing—

> "Every eye shall now behold Him
> Robed in dreadful majesty."

Yet a little candour will surely lead us to confess that this "permanent menace" is a permanent blessing to human society.

There is an important distinction between *sin* and *crime*, between an offence against God, and an offence against society. The magistrate does not hold a commission to punish—and has no scale delicate enough to estimate—sin as such. One cause of the wretched state of the Roman government is an ignorance of this distinction. A young gentleman plights his troth to a lady, and confirms it by an oath. He is tried by the civil tribunal—not for the social crime of a broken engagement, but for the sin of a violated appeal to God. "Above one half of human actions," says Bishop Taylor, "is by the laws of man left unregarded and unprovided for. Of two thousand sins that cry aloud to God for vengeance, scarce two are noted by the public eye, and chastised by the hand of justice." Now, as beyond all question, a greater proportion of human misery arises from sin than from crime, in any question of the moral tendency of this "Apocalyptic teaching," it is only fair to consider the bearing of this "permanent menace" on the diminution of so tremendous an evil.

The gospel of Christ has a strange power of touching faint

and almost evanescent lines, written upon the page of human nature, and making them stand out in characters of light. A great writer has told us that there is something within us which starts up at the annunciation of general ideas, and welcomes them, as the exile in a foreign land starts at the music of his native valleys. Does not the Apocalyptic teaching waken such mysterious chords? Does it not touch such half-faded lines?

Consider the phenomena of memory and conscience. In some of the most beautiful and affecting sentences in English philosophical literature, Locke says: "In some cases, ideas in the mind quickly fade, and often vanish quite out of the understanding, leaving no more footsteps, or remaining character of themselves, than shadows do flying over fields of corn, and the mind is as void of them, as if they had never been there. The ideas, as well as children, of our youth, often die before us; and our minds represent to us those tombs to which we are approaching; where, though the brass and marble remain, yet the inscriptions are effaced by time, and the imagery moulders away. The pictures drawn in our minds are laid in fading colours; and, if not sometimes repeated, vanish and disappear. We oftentimes find the fires of a fever, in a few days, calcine all those images to dust and confusion, which seemed to be as lasting as if graved in marble." Perhaps these beautiful sentences might have been made more beautiful, because truer, by including another set of mental phenomena. Perhaps we should speak of corn-fields which, under some magic sunlight, give back all the moral lights and shadows which have ever rippled over their surface. Children, whom we lost long since, in a great throng, and who glide into our presence, noiselessly, just as they were scores of years ago. Pictures, which fade away like a breath, at some mysterious touch of damp, but come out again upon the plate.

Calcined shapes, which fill themselves up, amidst the ashes in which they lie. Memory has strange wastings, but it has revivals stranger still. The old man's memory is the one thing more strange and touching than the old man's forgetfulness. I need not speak of the phenomena of conscience, —of that marvellous induction by which men gather the existence of a moral law, its necessity, validity, and universality. Men in all Christian lands hear that "God hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness, by that Man whom He hath ordained;" that the calmest and truest lips which ever spoke on earth tell us that, not "in full day" (as M. Renan has stupidly and tastelessly said), but that on a vault of midnight darkness, "the sign of the Son of Man shall appear;" that all nations shall be gathered before Him, and that He shall reward every man with a reference to this life-work, and that the dead shall be judged out of those things which are written in the books. These utterances, floating about every Christian land, take up the obscure prophecies of memory and conscience, and give them an irresistible interpretation. They touch those faint, dim lines, until they burn and blaze upon the chamber-wall of the human spirit in lines of living fire. They proclaim that "God, by His power, will wipe away the dust from the tables of our memory," and fulfil the forebodings of our conscience. A wish has been expressed that some one would write a treatise upon the unconscious moral lessons imbibed from nature. How some men, in languid and voluptuous climates, feel a kindred power, which seems to justify the working of their hearts. How others may have learned firmness from the rocks, and adventure from the tides, and calmness or purity from the steadfast sky behind the drifting clouds. Who can estimate the unconscious influence exercised by truths in our Christian lands, even upon those who may suppose that they are

impervious to them? When M. Renan can calculate the sins which have been hindered by this belief in the Apocalyptic element of Christ's teaching; then, and not till then, will he be in a position to estimate fairly the effect upon "human development" of this "permanent menace suspended over humanity."

2. We have to follow the moral result of this Apocalyptic teaching on the side of *hope*. Let us trace some of its bearings upon *art* and *society*.

Our delight in the creations of art and of poetic fiction has been analysed by two minds—one of extraordinary subtlety, the other of extraordinary depth. "The principle of our delight in fiction," says the elder Scaliger, "is, that our minds are by nature infinite. These creations surpass the vulgar limits of reality. A judicious critic far prefers a fine painting to a striking likeness. Perfect symmetry has been marred since the Fall. Other arts represent things as they are, like a sort of picture-alphabet to the ear; but the poet brings in another nature, and more varied pictures; and thus makes himself, as it were, a creator." Lord Bacon carries this thought further: "Since the sensible world is inferior in dignity to the rational soul; poetry seems to grant to human nature what history denies it. If any one looks into the thing profoundly, he will find that a solid argument may be deduced from poetry, that a nobler magnitude of events, a more perfect order, and a fairer variety, is necessary for the soul's satisfaction, than it can by any means find in nature since the Fall." Thus, then, our delight in poetry is a historian of the Fall and a prophecy of Heaven. There is something beautiful in the thought, that the pure pleasure which we feel when Shakespeare carries us to the Enchanted Isle, or Milton tells us of the glades of Paradise, is the witness of cravings within us which can only be satisfied by the Kingdom of

God. Hence, I suppose, it is, that poets of anti-Christian modes of thought rather exaggerate reality than express an ideal.

Well said a deep French thinker, just taken to his rest, in speaking of this Pantheistic school: "If this be true, in the eyes of the enlightened man, heaven is nothing but the insatiable and immortal desire of perfecting and embellishing earth. Every ideal is effaced. The statesman has nothing to do but to discover the strongest appetites of a country, and to satisfy them. Tha artist has nothing but to copy the real with a servile fidelity." The same teaching which brands the kingdom of God as a delusion withers art at its very root.

There is a more important moral bearing of the kingdom of God as the hope of humanity. This is an age of Utopias—universal beer, or universal hot and cold baths, or universal suffrage, or something else. I do not wish to speak otherwise than respectfully of these plans. I wish every man to have some of these things, more men to have others of them. But there are some points never to be forgotten. Comfort, after all, is not happiness. Man does not live by bread alone. The Pantheist, the secularist, the socialist, sometimes draw vague and splendid pictures of the future state of society. After all, comfort is all which they can promise in the city of God *minus* God. Are they sure that they can keep that promise? "It is questionable," says Mr. Mill, "if all the mechanical inventions yet made have lightened the day's toil of any human being. They have enabled a greater population to live the same life of drudgery and imprisonment, and an increased number of manufacturers and others to make large fortunes. They have increased the comforts of the middle classes; but they have not yet begun to effect those great changes in human destiny which it is in their nature and in their future to accomplish."

And it is only under two conditions, eminently unlikely to be fulfilled, that this great thinker considers that these inventions and conquests over nature can produce any considerable effect upon the happiness of mankind.

Again, M. Renan himself well says :—"The dreams of an ideal organization of society are in one sense only an expansion of the same idea, one of the branches of that immense tree, where every thought of the future grows, and of which the kingdom of God shall be for ever the root and stem. All true revolutions of humanity shall be grafted on that word. But stained with a gross materialism, aspiring to an impossibility, which is to ground universal happiness upon political and economical measures, the socialist attempts of our time will remain sterile until they take for their rule the real spirit of Christ." As then the kingdom of God, by the fears which it excites is the security, so by the hopes which it wakens, is it the salvation of society.

Thus the twenty-first chapter of Revelation may be looked upon as the charter of the progress of humanity. There is the true communism, "He that overcometh shall inherit all things." One who ascends a mountain, and surveys the landscape with a spirit worthy of it, is in a certain sense the owner of it. He may not possess a foot of land ; yet the sky, the river, the shadows, the valleys, are his. It may almost be said of him, that, with the heart of 'a king and yet a child,' he possesses all things without making any poorer. There vice is kept out for ever. That desire for beauty which witnesses to us that man does not live by bread alone, which statesmen benevolently endeavour to satisfy for the poor man by the park and the gallery, finds its eternal fulness. There are none of the scenes that make night hideous, when after the lamps are lit, some poor guilty wanderer sits down upon the doorsteps, and, wrapped in her thin shawl, sheds tears which, welling up from the

depth of her burning heart, trickle down between her wasted fingers. There the babbling music of the nursery is never silenced, and the old man's step is never missed upon the stair. These hopes are no shadowy dream. You remember the words in the "Tempest," which so well express the bitterness of an illusion—

> "The isle is full of noises,
> Sounds and sweet airs that give delight, and hurt not.
> Sometimes voices,
> That if I then had waked after long sleep
> Will make me sleep again; and then in dreams,
> The clouds, methought, would open out their riches
> Ready to drop on me, that when I waked,
> I cried to dream."

But there shall be no crying there, for "these words are *true* and *faithful*."

I have now well-nigh finished the task which I proposed, and with which I have so long exercised your patience. I have endeavoured to give you, as fairly and accurately as I could, M. Renan's analysis of our Saviour's idea of the Kingdom of God. I have examined the notion of that kingdom as one of "Galilean poor men." I have discussed M. Renan's assertion of a fanatical and unfulfilled promise of an immediate and visible advent, and surveyed the doctrine of the so-called apocalyptic kingdom on the tide of the hopes and fears which it is calculated to produce.

IV. I have but place for two or three short words.

First, then, I would willingly place in your hands one compendious answer to all such books as this.

We are taught by the most advanced thinkers in the school of modern philosophical history, that a great life can never be correctly read as a collection of isolated facts. It is an organic whole, and must be re-constructed as such. The

proof that we are in possession of the truth is, that we are able to combine the facts in a way which shall constitute a logical and probable recital, and which shall fail in explaining and co-ordinating no important element. Of course, this canon of historical re-construction is especially liable to be abused by "that forward delusive faculty, imagination;" but, when wisely and laboriously applied, men who had long been enigmas, Mahomet, Cromwell, the Bouddha, have thus yielded their secret to the penetrating search of modern thought.

Given, then, as a problem, the life of Christ, it is necessary to find such a point of view from which it may be read.

Many such points of view have been attempted. All, but one, have failed to co-ordinate the elements of the problem. The earlier heresies were but so many attempts to construct the life of Christ upon half believing, or three fourths believing theories. Later times have been bolder. Impostor or enthusiast? But the Divine sobriety of that teaching, the Divine perfection of that all-holy life, have shamed away the words from the most shameless of human lips. Saint and good man? Yet if He who could be represented as saying, "I and the Father are one," was not far more than a good man, He must have been far less. A legendary ideal? But the history is too life-like, too consistent, too original, too markedly distinguished from all apocryphal imitations, to admit such a supposition. Inconceivable mixture of the four, saint and enthusiast, saint yet impostor, decked out in mythical attributes? We have thus an equal blasphemy with a greater absurdity.

Such in different combinations are the only elements out of which unbelieving Christologies can be formed. We know the worst. Time can produce nothing new. The limits of sceptical invention are attained. It has exhausted

the old world, and has no new one to imagine. With an alteration in Dryden's magnificent lines, it may be said,

> "The force of lying can no further go,
> To make a third she joins the former two."

The one theory, then, which will read the Gospels, is the doctrine of the Incarnation of our Saviour Christ, both God and man.

Here, then, and I believe none of us will differ upon this point, was the importance of the Nicene Council and Creed. That council was not infallible. The whole is not greater than its parts, and that which is fallible in all its parts, must be fallible as a whole. But its members knew this. They knew that, by God's blessing, they had received from their fathers the one key which would unlock the cabinet of the Gospel. Here were apparently opposite facts to be met. On the one hand, the weariness by the wayside well; on the other, the sublime self-consciousness of Him who said, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." On the one hand, the weakness of the throbbing human flesh, and the ringing cry under the darkened heaven; on the other, the majesty of dying love, and the death that was heralded, not by broken words of convulsive agony, but by the loud voice of a Godlike strength. On the one hand, the piteous complaint, "I thirst;" on the other, the rent rocks, and the creation shrouded in sympathy with its dying Lord. Still as He walked this lower earth, the silence of the infinite spaces was broken ever and anon, now by the anthem that came rolling down from the heaven upon the Christmas Eve, now by a voice that came from a glory that was higher still; and rays of miracle streamed round the path of the Galilean from the heaven that is usually so dark. Men may make themselves merry, if they will, over theologians wrangling about a syllable or a letter, but then that letter was God.

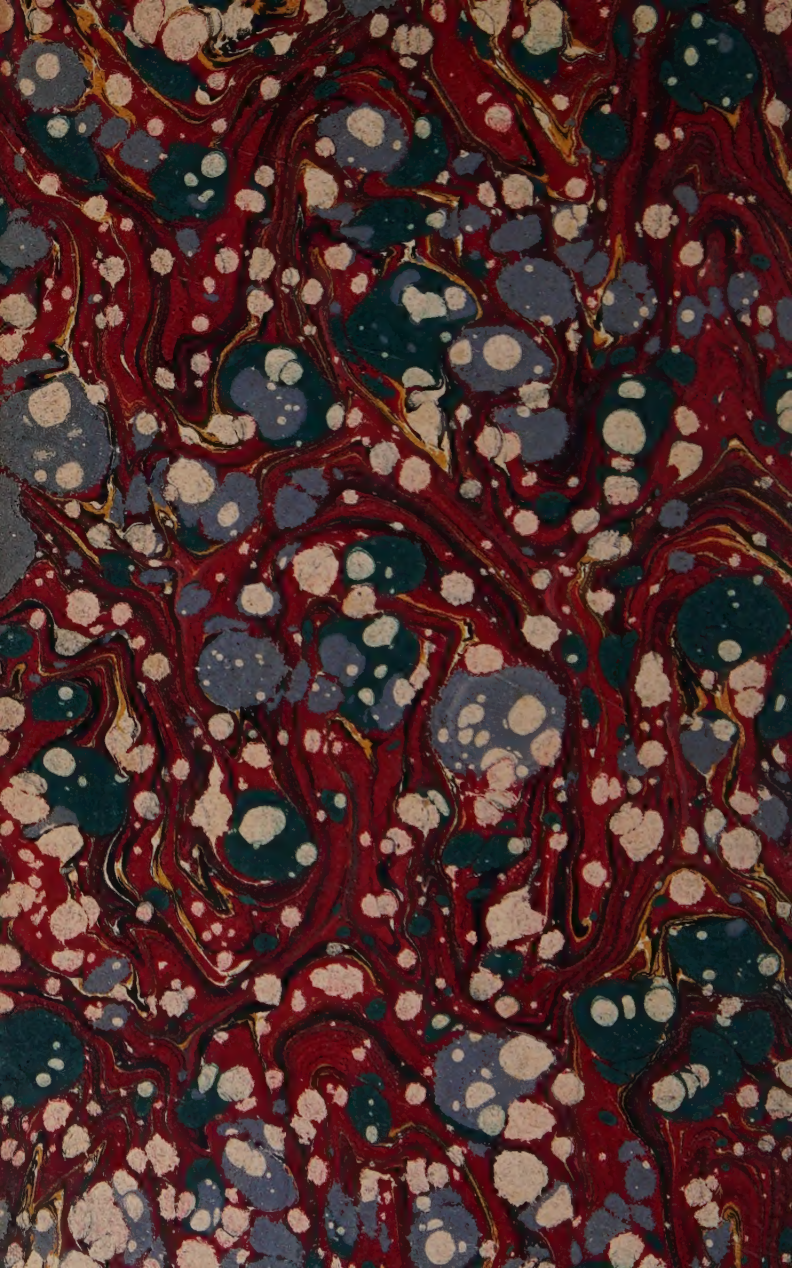
And so, as one philosophy after another produces its Christology, an uneasy cry rises from behind our battlements for an answer to be given. Answers have been given in abundance. Young men of this great City! I point you to a compendious answer. The Christ of the New Testament, and the Christ of Christendom; the Christ of the four Gospels, and of Christian hearts; the Christ of the book, and the Christ worshipped by all God's scattered children in our divided Christendom, which is yet one in this—Fenelon and Taylor, Francis of Sales and Chalmers, Charles Borromeo and Leighton—the Christ of the Evangelists can only be read by the Christ of our creed.

Secondly, all through his book, and partly in the passages I have cited to-night, M. Renan ventures to speak scornfully of the style of our blessed Lord's teaching, and of the phrases which he employs. Little indeed will the mincing criticism of a French litterateur affect the Christian, as he reads the fifth chapter of the Gospel of St. Matthew, or the fourteenth chapter of the Gospel of St. John. Go and look at some forest stretching far away with its interminable vistas,—has it the spruce correctness of a citizen's garden? Go and walk along the shore, and see the waves of ocean breaking in crested foam along the beach. Is that line of tide rigidly straight? Do we not see vast curves and magnificent recessions? Look again at that world which speaks to every child of God of his Father's love and of his Father's wisdom more eloquently than even the forest or the ocean,—I mean the starry sky. The dazzling lines of the architecture of the heavens have not been laid according to the plans of a human builder. The open page of the great book of God is not figured like a schoolboy's Euclid. But as you walk on some summer day, look at the dust or the sand below your feet, and you see some little line, some tiny circle, as correct as if it were rounded by a Lilliputian compass.

Do you know the reason of these things? The forest, the ocean, the sky, are the handiwork of God. The little line, the tiny circle, are the work of the burrowing insect or the wriggling worm. So the pages of the French litterateur, the "minute philosopher less than six feet high, attempting to dethrone the monarch of the universe," may be decked out with the tinsel of human rhetoric. But the page which records the Word of God manifest in the flesh, shall breathe of a freshness like that of the ocean and the sky, and be marked by a magnificence which is not irregular but Divine.

Thirdly, the acceptance of this book in France teaches us all in England a most important lesson. One thing is perfectly clear: Some Christ or other the age will have. The age may possibly prefer the Christ of M. Renan to one whom they have learned too much to look upon as merely the subject of a pageant, as merely the infant Christ whose effigy is laid in the Christmas crib, or the dead Christ whose image is nailed to the Cross. But the Christ of Bethlehem and Galilee, of Tabor and Jerusalem,—the Christ whose form is graven upon the plate of the everlasting gospel,—the Christ who speaks to us across the gulf of ages with living words so sad, so tender, and so awful,—the Christ to whom each one of us owes all that is best in himself both for this world and the next, the means of grace and hope of glory,—the Christ to whom humanity clings by every living fibre which it possesses. The ghastly lie of Strauss, or the luscious lie of Renan preferred to that Christ! Never, never!

And now, young men of this Association, Christian friends of this great City, to whom I have never spoken before, and to whom I shall probably never speak again, one word in conclusion. As this caricature of the Kingdom of God fades away, as the pure breath of God's word makes its image melt off as the impure breathing melts from a pane of glass

when the fresh open air is let in upon it, take the thought away with you of the true kingdom of God. First, the kingdom of God within us, for wherever there is a heart whose lusts are mortified through God's Holy Spirit, there is a new throne for Christ. Then, that other kingdom, that visible church, of which we are all members and subjects, and for which we should work in our several stations. And, then, far away, that other city, that better kingdom, from which, if we be faithful to our King and Master, we shall one day see all the hard angles of this life of ours rounded into a heavenly calm,—that city whose reflection is evermore seen beneath the deep calm stream of a Christian's life; at times, it may be, broken and quivering with the passing ripple of trial or temptation; wavering, it may be, but not obliterated, and trembling, but never passing away.

London: B. Pardon and Son, Printers, Paternoster-row.